THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

No. 3 1940

SIX MONTHS OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR

(AN EDITORIAL)

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SIX MONTHS OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR

SIX months have elapsed since the beginning of the second imperialist war in Europe. Military activities, however, have not yet really started. All is still quiet on the Western Front, where the main armed forces of the belligerent states are facing each other. No military operations of consequence have so far been attempted either on land or in the air. Naval warfare is being waged primarily for the purpose of disrupting commerce and the transportation of arms, raw materials and men.

While the situation remains unchanged at the front, the war has from the very beginning made itself strongly felt in the rear. Both in the belligerent and in the non-belligerent countries the social-economic effects of the war, the widespread economic dislocation caused by it, are fully in evidence.

The picture at present is the exact reverse of what it was at the beginning of the imperialist war of 1914-18. In 1914 hostilities on a large scale started in the very first days following the declaration of war. The social-economic effects of the war, however, became manifest considerably later.

The specific course the present imperialist war has taken is not fortuitous. Conditions in the capitalist world today are different from what they were when capitalism plunged into the imperialist war of 1914-18. At that time, too, capitalism was monopolistic, in the stage of imperialism, *i.e.*, in the stage of its decay and decline. But at that time it still represented an integral *world system,* a system that held sway in all the continents of the earth; it still boasted a certain amount of "stability," a certain "equilibrium," and the bourgeoisie still retained confidence in itself and in its own powers.

The first imperialist war ushered in the general crisis of capitalism. In the twenty-five years that separate the beginning of the first imperialist world war from the beginning of the second imperialist war in Europe the general crisis of capitalism has become aggravated to an extraordinary degree.

The victory of the great socialist October Revolution in the U.S.S.R. and the building of socialism on one-sixth of the globe signify that there no longer exists a single world-system of capitalism, there no longer exists "a *sole* and *all-embracing* system of world economy" (J. V. Stalin, *Leninism,* Vol. II, p. 254, International Publishers, New York), but two rival systems: the rising socialist system and the declining capitalist system which has become rotten to the core.

The capitalist countries launched into the second imperialist war at

a time when capitalism had not yet recovered from the ravages of the world economic crisis of 1929-33—the most acute and most devastating crisis in the history of capitalism—and when the storm clouds of a new world economic crisis were gathering on the horizon. Thus, capitalism was not as thriving and well-provided when it embarked upon the present war as it was at the time of the previous imperialist war.

The eve of the present war was marked by a number of wars in Europe, Africa and Asia. But these wars bore no resemblance to those that preceded the first imperialist World War. They were national-liberation wars and national-revolutionary wars, which shook the entire capitalist world and, for several years, rallied large masses of workers and other toilers in all the capitalist countries against world reaction. The national-revolutionary war of the Spanish people lasted more than two and a half years. The great national-liberation war of the four hundred fifty million-strong Chinese people against the Japanese invasion of their country had been going on for more than two years when the bourgeoisie unleashed the present war in Europe. These wars were and are instrumental in raising to a higher level the consciousness and organization of the millions taking part in them. They serve as an example for the peoples and nations oppressed by the imperialists, and as an inspiration in their struggle against their oppressors. The peoples that take up arms to repel the attacks of the imperialists no longer play the part of cannon-fodder, which they do in a war among imperialist powers. In the national-revolutionary war of the Spanish people, the working class played the role of leader, though not as yet to the full extent. The alliance of the working class and the peasantry had been established under the leadership of the former.

In China, scores of millions of working people—workers, peasants and intellectuals—are united in the common national front against the Japanese invaders, against imperialism. In the course of this war the downtrodden and oppressed masses are being drawn into active political life. In the fire of this struggle against the foreign invaders the masses who have awakened to a new life are being welded into iron cohorts of fearless fighters, recruited from all sections of the people—men, women and youth—who will no longer submit to any imperialism. It was in the fire of the struggle against the enemy that the best champions of their peoples, the Communist Parties of Spain and China, grew and became tempered.

The national-revolutionary war in Spain and the national-liberation war in China bore and still bear a strongly marked social imprint and have had far-reaching social and political effects. They served to delay the unleashing of the great imperialist war in Europe and hampered the imperialist powers in their preparations for a new redivision of the world. The Balkan wars, on the other hand, which preceded the imperialist war of 1914-

18, were not only the prelude to that war but one of the factors that accelerated its outbreak.

In a number of colonies and dependent countries, such as India, the Latin American countries, etc., a widespread mass movement against the imperialist slaveholders developed long before the outbreak of the present war; whereas no such movement existed in the colonies on the eve and at the beginning of the war of 1914-18.

It is obvious that under such conditions there can be no question of any "stability" or "equilibrium" of the capitalist system, even with reservations. It is therefore no accident that long before the outbreak of the present war, the bourgeoisie set up in many countries the open dictatorship of the most reactionary jingo elements of finance capital, and that in other countries the bourgeoisie has taken advantage of the war to establish, from the very outset, a military dictatorship with the assistance of whom it is smashing the class organizations of the working people, trying by these means to find a way out of the situation in which it has landed.

The capitalist system has embarked upon the present war with its organism more profoundly shaken than at the time of the war of 1914-18. That is precisely the reason why, unlike the situation at the time of the previous war, the social-economic effects of the present war have made themselves very strongly felt from the very outset. Everywhere huge armies have been mobilized. In France, for instance, a country with a population of 41,000,000, 5,000,000 men have been called to the colors. Great Britain, which is accustomed to have others fight her wars, already has about 1,500,000 men under arms. In many countries whole districts have been marked as war-zones and their population evacuated. Large parts of the population of London, Paris and other big cities have also been evacuated. In the majority of capitalist countries, economic life has been or is being put on a war footing. Huge stocks of war materials, which have so far not been used in action, are being piled up.

The maintenance of armies numbering millions of men, the allowances—niggardly as they are—for the families of the mobilized men, and the cost of evacuations cause the war budgets to swell to unparalleled dimensions. According to data cited by *Le Temps*, France is already spending 1,000,000,000 francs daily, although military operations have not really started; Great Britain is spending approximately £6,000,000 daily on the war. In 1940 France expects to spend on the war a sum exceeding her total national income by 60,000,000,000 francs. Japan's war budget of more than 10,000,000,000 yen for 1940 will consume the lion's share of her national income.

The rapid expansion of the war industries is attended by a fall in the output of the industries which do not directly produce for the war. While the war industries are experiencing a shortage of skilled workers, many of whom have been mobilized for active service, unemployment is growing

in many countries. The mobilization of working farmers and the requisitioning of the peasants' draft animals is attended by a reduction of the crop areas. In several countries a considerable decrease in the number of cattle and horses has been observed.

In the majority of the so-called neutral countries the devastating effects of the war on capitalist economy and on the life of the masses are felt as strongly as in the warring countries. In contrast with the first imperialist World War, many neutral countries have mobilized to the same, or almost the same, extent as the belligerent countries. The neutral countries are constantly faced with the danger of being drawn into the vortex of the war. Little Belgium, with a population of 7,000,000, is keeping 560,000 men under arms. Yet the number of officially registered unemployed has doubled since the beginning of the war and now reaches 260,000, an enormous figure for so small a country. The situation is similar in Denmark and in other "neutral" capitalist states. The war on the high seas is causing more damage to the economic life of these countries than to that of the belligerent countries.

Although at the front military operations have not yet really begun, the belligerent and many non-belligerent countries are already experiencing food difficulties. Serious difficulties of this nature are already plainly in evidence even in France and England, where during the war of 1914-18 a food shortage was first felt only in the second and the third year of the war. In France the Government has ordered three meatless days a week, in England two meatless days. There is a shortage of sugar, coffee and other necessities of life. Rationing has already been introduced in Great Britain and France, and even in some of the non-warring countries, as, for instance, Italy.

While a shortage of the necessities of life is to be observed in the capitalist countries of Europe, other countries as, for instance, some of the Latin American countries and partly the U.S.A., are going through an agricultural crisis. This is to be explained by the fact that today—and this also in contrast to the war of 1914-18—the war materials that are being purchased in America must be paid for in cash. That is why gold and currency cannot be spared for the purchase of food. On the other hand, naval warfare, which has been raging from the very outset of the war, is disrupting foreign trade and rendering communications by sea ever more precarious.

In addition to the shortage of necessities of life, many capitalist countries are experiencing a shortage of fuel, coal and electricity. There are coal difficulties even in Great Britain, which normally exported more coal than any other country. In Japan thousands of plants were forced to shut down owing to a shortage of electricity, so that in many industries output had to be considerably reduced. Prices of foodstuffs and consumers' goods are rising much faster than during the first imperialist war.

Currencies have already begun to depreciate, the English pound sterling being among the first to suffer.

Thus the effect of the war has been to further disorganize the entire economic system of capitalism, to render it even more chaotic and aggravate its contradictions.

But the imperialist war affects the individual capitalist countries in different ways. The country to profit most by the war is the U.S.A. The American bourgeoisie is taking advantage of this war in Europe to strengthen its position in the Latin American countries, in Canada and Australia—at the expense of Great Britain. In the Far East American imperialism is trying to take advantage of the increasing exhaustion of Japan as a result of the protracted war the latter is waging in China, and also of the fact that Great Britain and France are preoccupied with the war in Europe, in order to bring pressure to bear on Japan. American imperialism is striving to settle its imperialist differences with Japan at the expense of Japan herself, at the expense of Great Britain and France, and primarily at the expense of the Chinese people. The American bourgeoisie would like to become the arbiter of the Far East and, relying on its economic and financial might, to consolidate its position in China.

The American bourgeoisie is taking advantage of the present auspicious moment, when its competitors have their hands full with the war, to secure the most important markets. It extracts gold, currency and securities from Great Britain, France, Canada and other countries. It is enabled by the war orders to expand certain branches of American industry.

Thus the war serves to accentuate the contradictions between the imperialist powers, with American imperialism coming ever more to the fore, and its rivals—"friendly" England in the first place—being forced out of their positions.

The British bourgeoisie, on its part, is striving to shift the burden of the losses incurred as a result of the war—which cannot be fully covered by the intensified exploitation of its colonial slaves and of the English working people—onto the shoulders of its ally, France, and of the weaker neutral states.

The British bourgeoisie wants others not only to shed their blood for it in this war, but also to finance the war it is waging. Great Britain has been compelled to mobilize a fairly big army. But although her population (not counting the colonies) exceeds that of France by six million, she has called to the colors but one-third the number of men that have been mobilized for the French army. Great Britain keeps but a small part of her armed forces in France. The soldiers of the British Expeditionary Force in France receive 30 francs daily, whereas the French soldiers must content themselves with a daily allowance of 75 centimes in the rear and four francs at the front. Although Great Britain is spending on the war approximately as much as France, her position is obviously more advantageous than France's in this respect too; for, first she disposes of larger material resources

and, secondly, she has a larger colonial empire than France, which she is defending in this war. On the other hand, Great Britain is using her arbitrarily imposed control of the seas for the purpose of bringing pressure to bear on the weaker capitalist states in order to subject them economically and to finance the war partly at their expense.

The present war is not yet a world war in the full meaning of the term, but it clearly betrays the tendency to become one.

If the bourgeoisie has so far refrained from turning the present war into a bloody carnage, as was the case in 1914, it has done so not because of any humanitarian sentiments or considerations. It would also be wrong to conclude that in future, too, the war will proceed along the same lines as in the first six months. On the contrary, there is every reason to assume that the British and French imperialists will do their utmost to steer the war they have let loose in a different direction.

* * *

What has so far prevented military operation on a larger scale? The British and French imperialists who declared war on Germany, seeing their original plans for the war frustrated by the active peace policy of the Soviet Union, have been compelled to draw up new plans and to seek for new ways of unfolding the war. The old plan of the British and French imperialists was, by betraying the small powers, to influence Germany to start a war against the Soviet Union. But that plan collapsed even before the outbreak of the present war. Then they tried to provoke war between the Soviet Union and Germany by other means; they hoped to involve the Soviet Union in a war with Germany by pretending to form a bloc of the U.S.S.R., Great Britain and France against aggression. Their plan was to let the Soviet Union and Germany fight it out between themselves while they would reserve for themselves the role of "arbiters." This perfidious plan was thwarted by the signing of the Soviet-German Pact of Non-Aggression, and of the Frontier and Friendship Pact.

Whereupon the warmongers proceeded to hatch another plan. This time it was Finland that was to serve as base of operations against the Soviet Union. Their whole immense machinery of propaganda and all their enormous lie and slander factories were set in motion for this purpose. They let loose their faithful watchdogs, the Social-Democratic leaders. Like a burglar who cries "Stop thief!" the British and French imperialists and their social-imperialist lackeys in the camp of the Second International raised a hue and cry over the alleged Soviet menace to the independence of Finland, as well as of Sweden and Norway.

The British and French imperialists provided Finland with arms and promised every assistance, including contingents of their own troops. They were particularly lavish in their promises of help to Finland on the part of the neutral capitalist states. The warmongers hoped that "the Finnish question"

would lead to a conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, or that it would serve them as a convenient pretext for extending the theater of war and enable them to draw the Soviet Union into the war. But Germany refused to fall into the trap set by London and Paris.

When it became quite evident that "the Finnish plan" of the Anglo-French imperialists was doomed to failure, the governments of Sweden and Norway definitely refused to submit to the pressure of the warmongers, and reiterated their previous declarations that they would maintain an attitude of neutrality to the events in Finland.

In the course of about three months the glorious Red Army battered down the strongly fortified line on the Karelian Isthmus, which bourgeois military experts had declared impregnable. By smashing these fortifications, the workers' and peasants Red Army of the Land of Socialism, splendidly armed and equipped and its ranks made up of steeled Stalinist cadres of men, commanders and political commissars, imbued with the all-conquering spirit of Soviet patriotism, has also finally dashed the plans of the British and French imperialists in Finland.

The peace treaty signed between the Soviet Union and Finland on March 12, 1940, sealed the doom of this plan to provoke a war against the Soviet Union. It dealt a smashing blow to the strategic designs of the warmongers, which were based on the "traditional" policy of letting others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them.

The successive failures of their plans has compelled the British and French imperialists to keep on "reorientating" themselves in an effort to find new ways for realizing their old designs. This is one of the reasons why they are slow in launching military operations on a large scale. Another reason is the fact that the Soviet Union, which is maintaining an attitude of genuine neutrality in the imperialist war in Europe, has been rapidly increasing its influence on international affairs. The fear entertained by the Anglo-French imperialists of this growing influence of the Soviet Union on the course of international events, as well as their fear of the growing prestige of the Land of Socialism among the working people in the capitalist countries, and of the increasing resistance of the latter to the imperialist war, are also factors that retard the unleashing of hostilities on a large scale on the Western Front.

Thus, if the imperialist bourgeoisie has refrained from slaughtering hundreds of thousands on the battlefields, the working people owe this in the first place to the great socialist state, which has frustrated and is frustrating the plans of the war provocateurs, and which, by its very existence and by its active peace policy, represents the most formidable obstacle to the unleashing of the imperialist war.

The British and French imperialists are banking on three factors which, they hope, will enable them to win the present war and achieve their aims. The first is defeat of Germany in battle; the

second is the effects of the blockade; and the third is the growing opposition within Germany which should contribute to the realization of their military plans.

But they are aware that in a military respect Germany is stronger than England and France. Germany has but one front, and this front is rather short (350 kilometers) and well fortified. The effects of the blockade on Germany are by far not so serious as they were in 1914-18. Germany is now in a position to obtain raw materials and food supplies from the Danubian countries, the Balkans and Scandinavia. The commercial treaty concluded between Germany and the U.S.S.R. renders the British blockade still less effective.

Neither can Great Britain and France hope to find much support for their policy in Germany itself. The working class of Germany has its own class interests, which are absolutely at variance with the interests of the British and French bourgeoisie. What could the German people gain if Great Britain and France should succeed in their war designs? What reason is there for the German working people to support the policy of British and French imperialism? Is it in order to bring about a new "super-Versailles" and the division of Germany into two mutually hostile states, as the gentlemen of the Labor Party and their imperialist masters dream? In order to bring about a second edition of the Westphalian peace of 1648, by which Germany would be carved up into more than three hundred little states, as de Kerillis in France and other politicians propose? Perhaps for the sake of the "freedom" and "democracy" which the English lords and Paris bankers promise the German people but which they are fast destroying in their own countries? Or perhaps for the brutal oppression, violence and chicanery to which they resort in India and Africa in order to crush the struggle the peoples of these lands are waging for freedom and independence?

Their hopes for a quick military victory, or for the effects of the blockade, or for support for the policy of British and French imperialism within Germany have proved to be built on sand. The British and French warmongers are therefore striving to extend the theater of war, to ensure their aims by turning the present war into a real world war. The warmongers pin their hopes on the creation of new fronts. They are trying to erect new barriers against Germany, to spread the conflagration to ever more countries, and to cut Germany off from the sources of raw materials and food supplies. They are exerting all their efforts to shift the war to the outlying regions, to fight it out, as far as possible with the hands of the backward colonial peoples and the peoples of dependent countries. Finally, they have not given up hope, despite all the setbacks to their previous plans, of turning the edge of the present war against the Soviet Union.

The warmongers in the Anglo-French camp are also working fe-

verishly to extend the war conflagration to the south and southeast of Europe. The British and French imperialists leave no stone unturned in their efforts to convert the so-called Balkan Entente into a war bloc and to draw into this bloc all the Balkan anad Danubian countries.

In the Near East, in Syria, Egypt and other countries, the British and French imperialists are building up a big army which they have placed under the command of the French general Weygand, who is known, among other things, as a patron of the Cagoulards. This army is being recruited primarily at the expense of the colonial peoples. With Turkey already lined up, the war incendiaries are bending every effort in the Near East to draw Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia into the war.

The purpose of these plans of the British and French imperialists is to prepare for an attack upon Germany from the south, through the Balkans. But at the same time they are harboring the design of using, under favorable circumstances, this army against the Soviet Union. In the words of Stalin:

". . . every time that capitalist contradictions begin to grow acute the bourgeoisie turns its gaze towards the U.S.S.R. as if to say: 'Cannot we settle this or that contradiction of capitalisn, or all the contradictions taken together, at the expense of the U.S.S.R.?' " (*Leninism,* Vol. II, p. 260.)

The British and French imperialists are striving to drag into the war all the capitalist countries which are so far not directly involved in it. This is the reason for the frequently recurring statements in the French press about the necessity of a "preventive occupation" of Belgium by French armed forces. This also explains Churchill's threats addressed to the neutral capitalist states.

The warmongers are also working assiduously to draw the United States into the war. The British and French imperialists are plainly dissatisfied with the position of the United States which so far has confined itself to lifting the embargo on the export of arms. They want to see America lined up on their side as an ally, for otherwise they cannot hope to win the war.

In the Far East they are trying for the time being to come to terms with Japan at the expense of the Chinese people, endeavoring to postpone the settlement of their differences with Japanese imperialism until a more auspicious moment and in the meantime to divert Japan from her designs on the British concessions and French Indo-China. That is why they are encouraging the capitulators in China and are exerting pressure to force China to conclude a "peace" that would offer them opportunities for spreading the world war.

Enmeshed in its imperialist contradictions and beset by enormous difficulties, the bourgeoisie is using its war dictatorship to come down heavily on the working masses.

At the beginning of the first World War, in 1914, the bourgeoisie and the social-chauvinists succeeded in whipping up some en-

thusiasm among the masses by their deceptive slogans. Today the situation is different. The masses are showing no enthusiasm for the imperialist war; they are profoundly distrustful of the official slogans of the imperialist bourgeoisie and sceptical of the promises of the imperialists and their agents.

The masses no longer believe that this is a war "to end war." And only the most backward sections of the working people may still be taken in by the lie spread by the Anglo-French bourgeoisie and the treacherous leaders of Social-Democracy about this being a war "against fascism."

The bourgeoisie and its agents have no prospects to hold out to the masses with regard to the outcome of the present difficult situation. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who fully supports the war plans of the British bourgeoisie, recently gave vent in the press to bitter complaints because people were very frequently heard to say that they knew *whom* they were fighting, but did not know for *what* they were fighting. Neither the bourgeoisie nor its Social-Democratic agents can explain to the working people *why* they are expected to accept intolerable sufferings and privations, *for what cause* they are called upon to shed their blood and give their lives.

In the first World War the bourgeoisie lowered the standards of the working people slowly, by degrees. In the present war it *began* with enforcing a drastic reduction in the standards of the working people in an effort to cover the costs of the war by enormously intensified exploitation, longer hours, a reduction in real wages and the mass employment of low-paid woman and child labor. This offensive upon the standards of the people is taking place not only in the warring countries, but also in the neutral capitalist countries, and not only in Europe, but also in America and other parts of the world.

In many capitalist countries wages are being heavily taxed. Bourgeois economists of the type of Keynes in England, acting in the interests of the bankers of the City, have evolved a new "theory" about the methods of financing the war, which consists in making a considerable part of the workers' wages cover the war expenditures. This "theory" is in fact already being put into practice in France. The traitor Blum is "warning" the workers against demanding rises in wages or a reduction of the present sixty to seventy-two hour week, because, he says, that would lead to dissension between the workers and the peasants and—what is more—between the front and the rear. Blum's accomplice, Jouhaux, is indignant because the British workers demand and win wage increases. He is afraid that this is setting a bad example for the workers in France and might lead to consequences undesirable for the bourgeoisie.

Seeing itself driven into a tight corner, the bourgeoisie is unleashing a ferocious offensive against the working people, robbing them of their elementary rights, reducing the workers to the status of serfs

who are not permitted to change their places of work, banning every struggle in the economic field, and liquidating the last remnants of democratic liberties.

During the war of 1914-18, a certain amount of "democracy" was preserved in the bourgeois-democratic countries, particularly in the neutral countries. Today the imperialist bourgeoisie is carrying on its offensive against the working people at a much faster pace. The bourgeoisie is now trying to establish its terrorist dictatorship in the countries in which for various reasons—partly because of the broad mass movement of the People's Front—it was unable to do so before the present war.

But while the bourgeoisie today is setting its entire machinery of coercion in full action against the working people, *the latter on their part have, from the very first days of the war, been offering resistance to the imperialist war, to the policy of reaction and to the offensive of capital.* This is also a new feature characteristic of the present war. In a number of capitalist countries the very first months of the war have been marked by a comparatively large movement of the working people for the granting of their immediate demands—a movement which often finds its expression in mass strikes that break out against the will and over the heads of the reactionary trade union leaders.

This movement of the working people for their immediate demands is attended by growing dissatisfaction among the masses of the people with the imperialist war. Their profound distrust of the fraudulent slogans of the bourgeoisie finds expression in *the movement for peace,* for a speedy end of the war. The "Fight for peace" slogan is today the most popular slogan of the working people. This is precisely the slogan that can rally the largest masses of the people and unite them in the struggle against the war. The peace movement has not yet assumed the proportions of a storm, but it is spreading to ever larger sections of society. It is winning support among the workers and peasants, among the urban toiling people, among the soldiers and among the progressive intelligentsia.

Hundreds and thousands of the most varied mass organizations of the working people in many capitalist countries have already come out for peace, for the immediate termination of the predatory war.

The movement for peace, against the warmongers and against the "union sacrée" which the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democratic leaders are preaching, is the first serious indication of important processes that are at work among the masses, processes which are helping to crystallize the political consciousness of the masses and to raise it to a higher level. From the standpoint of the working class movement in the capitalist countries, this movement for peace is a particularly important positive result of the first six months of the imperialist war in Europe. This movement will lead to a new regrouping of the forces of the working class and of the large masses of

other working people; it is the embryo of a wide people's front of the toilers, which is destined to play a tremendous part in the struggle of the masses to find their own way out of the present war.

The main obstacle that stands in the way of the developing mass movement against the imperialist war and for peace is the treacherous policy of the Social-Democratic leaders. With the beginning of the present war the Second International has actually ceased to exist as an international organization. The leadership of its surviving sections, which have placed themselves fully at the service of Anglo-French imperialism, have the monopoly of legality in most of the capitalist countries. They enjoy the support of capital and of its state apparatus, especially of the military and police apparatus of the Anglo-French imperialist bloc. The organizers of the present war in Europe have entrusted to the leadership of Social-Democracy the same tasks that they performed during the first imperialist World War—to justify the predatory war, to prevent and sabotage the struggle of the working masses against the war, and to ensure the unrestricted exploitation and suppression of the working people.

But, in addition, the imperialist bourgeoisie has entrusted to its Social-Democratic agents another important task—to shake the confidence of the masses in the peace policy of the great socialist state, to detach the working people from their strongest support in the struggle for peace, to isolate them and thus render it easier for the bourgeoisie to crush the mass movement.

That is why a determined struggle must be waged against the traitorous policy of the Social-Democratic leaders; for without such a struggle there can be no question of effective resistance to the attempts of the reactionary bourgeoisie to spread the war, or of a successful movement for a speedy end of the war and for peace.

* * *

After six months of the war in Europe, two opposite lines, two diametrically opposed prospects are already discernible.

The imperialists are prepared to sacrifice their own and other peoples in this war, in order to realize their predatory plans. They are intensifying enormously the exploitation and oppression of the working people in the home countries, destroying working class organizations, and imprisoning, persecuting and outlawing Communists. At the same time they are tightening the chains that fetter their colonial slaves. They are bent on establishing and perpetuating a regime of military and police terrorism in all countries, so as to prevent the outburst of the inevitable social upheaval that is maturing in the masses of the people, and thus to maintain their class domination.

The working class wants to put a stop to the predatory war, to prevent the further spread of the conflagration; it wants, by means of a powerful popular movement, to frustrate the criminal designs of the

imperialists who are out to destroy whole peoples in this war. The working class wants to fight against the wartime terror, against the enslavement of the working people, against the oppression of nations, against the enslavement of the colonial peoples, for the emancipation of all the working people from every kind of capitalist domination.

The imperialists are bent on extending the theater of war, on drawing ever larger masses into the vortex of the war—all the peoples of Europe, America, Australia, and the colonial slaves of Asia and Africa.

The working class—once it has recognized its historic role—is the only class that is capable of delivering all the peoples from the imperialist war and capitalist slavery. It fights and will continue to fight resolutely against the extension of the theater of war, against the present European war advancing to a world war. It is sounding the clarion call for this struggle, and it will rally around itself ever larger masses of the working people.

The imperialists are raging, because things are going badly for them, because, far from growing in strength, they have become weaker than before.

The working class does not bow its head in the face of reprisals, in the face of the war terror and imperialist oppression, because it is conscious that it is now stronger than before, that with every day that passes it grows in power, that it heads the ever intensifying and extending mass movement against the predatory war, against capitalism.

In the majority of the capitalist countries the really large masses of the people have not yet passed on to action; nor does a movement exist such as would rally millions for an *active* struggle against the imperialist war. In extent, depth, consciousness and organization, the mass movement against the war is not developing *evenly* in the various capitalist countries. To a large extent the development if this movement is still hampered by the policy of deception and betrayal pursued by the leadership of the Social-Democratic parties, and by the military and police terror of the bourgeoisie.

But, while deception and bourgeois terror may retard the growth of the mass movement, there is no power on earth that can arrest its inexorable progress. This movement will grow and ripen. Its thousands of streams will combine into a mighty torrent which will carry along the largest masses of the people in all capitalist countries and on all continents. The watchword of the working people: "For peace, bread and freedom!" is becoming a mighty material force impelling forward the millions of exploited and oppressed who are seeking for a way out of their endless suffering and the imperialist war.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

BY PETER WIEDEN

DESPITE the immense war propaganda, the criminal imperialist war incendiaries have not succeeded in convincing the masses that a new world-wide slaughter is necessary and "just." The broad masses of the people in the warring countries may not yet be able to discern that the real enemy is their own bourgeoisie and that behind the manifold war propaganda lurks the degenerate, cruel leer of the capitalist bandits; still they are far from enthusiastic over the new imperialist war. The shrieking war propaganda is unable to drown out the voice of doubt or to allay their worries. The nebulous character of the official war aims of the various governments is not such as to give the war a popular tinge, to put the workers and peasants and professional people in a warlike mood. The question: "Why must we wage war?" cannot be decreed or argued out of existence. The people are war-weary before the war is in full swing.

In contrast to the first imperialist war, an anti-war movement has come into being this time during the very first months after the outbreak of hostilities, and this movement is rapidly gaining ground. Hardly a day passes without some working class organizations in England—Labor Party, trade union and cooperative locals—passing anti-war resolutions demanding that the war be ended at once.

In France public demonstrations against the war are rendered impossible by the police terror prevailing there, but the French bourgeoisie cannot conceal the fact that its war policy is encountering stiff resistance among the working people. The terroristic tactics adopted by it against the laboring masses, such as the smashing of the trade unions loyal to their class, are clear evidence of this.

In the United States the movement for peace is developing, embracing not only the mass of workers but also great sections of the middle classes, particularly the intellectuals. In all belligerent countries and in all countries that have not yet been drawn into the maelstrom of war, diverse forces have begun to assert themselves which brand the war as imperialistic and are opposed to it in consequence. The attitude of the youth is particularly significant. It is gaining increasing prominence in the struggle for peace and shows little inclination to risk life and limb for the imperialist butchers and traders in human blood.

This yearning for the end of the

war before it rages in all its fury, this longing which is sweeping the masses with elemental force, opens up vast opportunities of uniting various strata of the people—differing in their political opinions—to wage a joint struggle for peace, against the imperialist warmongers and against the world system of imperialism. Today no task is more important or urgent than that of mobilizing all forces to prevent the imperialist incendiaries of war from utilizing the present moment to spread the conflagration to Scandinavia, the Balkans and other countries so as to convert it into a *world war*. Do not delay! Right now everything must be done to avert another world-wide carnage, to make impossible another internecine struggle between titanic armies, to prevent the well-greased functioning of the horrible war machine, to stop the juggernaut of war from spreading death and destruction unimpeded. Right now, without delay, the forces of peace must exercise their full determination in concert to foil the plan of the organizers of world war to consummate their crime.

"For the working class there is only one correct stand—irreconcilable, courageous struggle against the imperialist war, against war culprits and the sponsors of this war, primarily those in their own country—a struggle to end this predatory war. This is the most just of causes, one dictated by the fundamental interests of the proletariat and all working people." (Georgi Dimitroff: *The War and the Working Class of the Capitalist Countries*, p. 13.)

This is the immediate task, a stupendous task, confronting all the forces of peace.

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The fact that this imperialist war called forth a movement for peace so shortly after its inception is to be explained not only by the bitter experience gained by the broad masses in the World War of 1914-18 and by the subsequent dictated peace of Versailles, which left unfulfilled all the fine promises of the warring powers and which accomplished nothing but the bringing forth of new wars. The underlying causes of this peace movement are to be sought not only in the fact that all the burdens of this war have, from the very first, been loaded directly and completely onto the shoulders of the working people, that the financing of this war is saddled directly and unreservedly upon the laboring masses, and that the living standards of the common people were lowered immediately very appreciably. Its root cause lies in a number of fundamental changes in the international situation since the first imperialist World War.

At that time there was no breach in the imperialist world system. The imperialist states were fighting it out "among themselves." The revolutionary working class was no factor which they seriously considered in their calculations.

Today the imperialist world system is no longer without a breach. Today one-sixth of the world is socialist. The socialist Soviet Union has come into existence. A new world, the world of socialism, has

come into being and exists alongside of capitalism. And this world is growing and constantly gaining in strength.

At that time the imperialist war had been preceded by a more or less peaceful period. The imperialist world system had not been shaken to its foundations. In most countries the masses had not gone through revolutionary struggles, had no, or very little, experience in revolutionary fighting.

Today we are in an epoch of wars and revolutions out of which the second imperialist war arose. Capitalism is shaken to its foundations. In many countries after the first World War the workers and the toiling people took up arms against their imperialist robbers and oppressors. The peoples of the colonies and dependent countries have come into motion. Countless multitudes among the oppressed in various parts of the world have accumulated rich experience in revolutionary struggle.

At that time Social-Democratism was predominant in the working-class movement of Europe and America. There was only the one international—the treacherous opportunist Second International. The bourgeoisie's ideological influence among the masses of workers and all laboring people was great. In almost all belligerent countries the class-conscious workers were left leaderless. Only Russia had a revolutionary party of the proletariat. Only the Bolsheviks fought consistently against opportunism at home and abroad. The overwhelming majority of the working class in the other countries had fallen a prey to bourgeois chauvinism, believed the lies of the imperialist war lords and their Social-Democratic lackeys and saw no other way out than the victory of "their own" bourgeoisie. Lenin stated at the time without mincing words:

"In 1914 the European war flared up; the bourgeoisie everywhere temporarily vanquished the proletariat and swept it into the turbid stream of nationalism and chauvinism." (V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V, p. 161.)

Today the influence of the Social-Democratic leaders is incomparably smaller than during the first imperialist war. The most advanced sections of the working class have definitely turned their backs on the treacherous Second International, and even the masses that today still adhere to Social-Democracy are watching with increasing distrust the "labor leaders" who carry grist to the mill of British imperialism.

In the Communist International the working class has acquired a revolutionary leading center. In all countries there are Communist Parties which have tried and tested cadres and already exert influence over considerable masses of working people. Chauvinism encounters serious obstacles among the working class and also among other sections of the people. The lies spread about the war by the bourgeoisie and its Social-Democratic servitors are nailed much more quickly and effectively than during the first imperialist war. The "democratic" illusions have lessened considerably compared with those of twenty-five years ago.

This changed international situation is the basic cause for the anti-war movement among the toiling population which arose immediately after the outbreak of the war and which is rapidly gaining ground. From this changed international situation the revolutionary working class must draw important conclusions in its struggle for peace.

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In the first imperialist war the working class did not act as an organized force in opposing the two groups of belligerent powers. The world proletariat was divided into many factions, and was for a long time incapable of action because of the treason of the Second International. The Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, considered that their most important task was to endow this force with political and organizational form, to make the working class conscious of the fact that it and it alone represented this force.

The Bolsheviks worked untiringly to expose the true nature of imperialism and the imperialist war. With ardent passion, patience and persistency they stigmatized opportunism and made clear the revolutionary aims of the working class. Indefatigable in their efforts, they reared the revolutionary vanguard of the working class ideologically and rallied it politically, wrested the advanced workers away from the influence of the bourgeoisie and of Social-Democratism, organized everywhere cadres of proletarian forces and trained them to cope with the historical tasks confronting them.

They consolidated the party of a new type, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, and at the same time established the foundations of a genuinely proletarian, genuinely revolutionary international, the Communist International. They led the workers, the toiling masses of the old empire of the tsars, to victory and thus made a broad breach in the whole system of world imperialism. They accomplished what was most difficult, and created new conditions much more favorable for the struggle of the working class.

Ever since the great socialist October Revolution this force has been facing the group of imperialist powers organized as a state. The working class has been victorious in a country of gigantic proportions. One-sixth of the earth has been swept clear of bourgeois society which was superseded by socialist society. The imperialist world system is broken through. The workers, the toiling masses of all countries, have gained a great fatherland which they can never lose, an inexhaustible central source of power, *the socialist Soviet Union.*

The existence and steadily increasing material, political and moral weight of the Soviet Union have brought about a change in the whole relation of forces internationally. The country which at the beginning of the first imperialist war was condemned to impotence is today a factor of tremendous consequence. The voice of the socialist Soviet Union can be heard in the farthest corners of the world. All imperialist powers are constrained to reckon with a factor of such colossal power. This changes

the entire character of the struggle for peace. In the World War of 1914-18 the imperialist powers alone had any say about war and peace. Consequently, any peace concluded among them could, as Lenin emphasized:

". . . but serve to perpetuate this worsening of the economic and political conditions of the masses, no matter what the outcome of the war may be, *once the bourgeois social system is preserved.*" (*Ibid.*, pp. 232-33. Italics mine—*P.W.*)

Today socialist society coexists with bourgeois society. Today, as Comrade Molotov expressed it on the conclusion of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact:

"It is impossible to decide questions of international relations without the active participation of the Soviet Union, and certainly not questions involving Eastern Europe."

Today in the question of peace the socialist Soviet Union also casts its weight into the scales. The imperialist powers can no longer settle things as if they were just "among themselves," for the cause of the working people of the whole world is now linked up with the great land of socialism. This mighty shift in the relation of forces in favor of the workers and all toiling people makes real the prospects of success in the struggle for peace.

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The Soviet Union has never abandoned its untiring struggle for peace. It exerted enormous efforts to prevent the outbreak of war in Europe, and ever since its outbreak it seeks to bring about its early conclusion. The Soviet Union is profoundly interested in peace. It is not fighting for colonies, for sources of raw materials or for areas abroad suitable for capital investments, for all such war aims have their root in capitalist profit economy. In contrast with the capitalist countries, it has by peaceful constructive effort increased the prosperity of all its citizens, raised the level of its industrial and agricultural production, perfected its technical equipment and raised the standard of culture of its peoples beyond anything hitherto attained. Peace serves and recruits for socialism. Years before the outbreak of the second imperialist war the *superiority of socialism over capitalism* had become evident. With calm self-confidence socialism could challenge capitalism to peaceful competition.

In the course of this tremendous competition the working people of all countries could not but become convinced that the future belongs to socialism. Every new success of socialist construction meant a new blow for decaying capitalism, which was sinking ever deeper into the morass of catastrophic crises and whose inability to satisfy even the most elementary demands of the laboring population became ever more pronounced. The peaceful victories of socialism in the Soviet Union shook the capitalist world, made the working people more conscious of their strength and in-

creased their aspiration to secure also in their own countries a socialist solution of their problems. Thus the Soviet Union was able through its unparalleled peace effort to gain the sympathy, love and admiration of ever broader masses of the people in the capitalist countries. Thus the Soviet Union became an inexhaustible source of strength of the international proletariat and of all working people and nations groaning under the yoke of imperialism.

All this necessarily leads to the conclusion that, in contradistinction to all the imperialist countries, the Soviet Union sincerely desires peace and that *its interest as a state are identical with the interests of all working people.* From this it also follows that the development of the forces of the Soviet Union in every direction and the strengthening of its international prestige is not only the sacred duty of all Soviet people, but is thoroughly consonant with the interests of all peoples. It is the aim of its entire policy to frustrate the world war contemplated by the British and French imperialists, to narrow down the theater of war and to enable the countries hard pressed by England to keep out of the war. The stronger the Soviet Union becomes, the greater its security on every side, the more immune it is against every attack on the part of capitalist states, the higher the forces working for peace can raise their heads anywhere on earth. *Every increase in the strength of the Soviet Union implies a corresponding increase in the strength of the forces of peace in all countries.*

Through the active peace policy of the Soviet Union, through the increasing weight of the socialist force as compared with that of the groups of imperialist powers, the peace movement in the various countries receives its great historic content. It is Anglo-French imperialism that brusquely rejects all proposals for peace, that not only refuses to command a halt to the war but on the contrary is maneuvering to bring about a world war. Therefore the struggle for a speedy ending of the war, the struggle for peace, must take the form of a struggle against the strongest pillars of the imperialist world system.

It is the Soviet Union that is struggling indefatigably for the narrowing down of the theater of war, for the early termination of the war; and therefore the working people and nations who are fighting for peace must recognize the Soviet Union as their most powerful ally and must unite their movement for peace more and more with the forces of socialism in order to form one great anti-imperialist stream. *The struggle for peace is inseparably bound up with the support of the policy of the Soviet Union by the working people of all countries.*

Consequently, the revolutionary working class must constantly bear in mind the new and tremendous importance that the peace propaganda, the struggle for the swift termination of the war, acquires because of the existence of the socialist Soviet Union and its increasing might and influence, because of the fact that today it is impossible to decide important questions of international relations

without the active participation of the Soviet Union.

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The powerful, youthful world of socialism and the senile, inwardly putrescent world of capitalism stand face to face. The crisis of the capitalist world system has enormously increased in intensity since the first imperialist war. All the contradictions inherent in capitalism have been accentuated in the extreme: the antagonism between the various groups of imperialist powers, the antagonism between exploiters and exploited, the antagonism between the home countries of finance capital and the nations they oppress. Economic crises of unprecedented proportions have dislocated capitalism and called forth anti-capitalist sentiments among the broad masses.

In many countries the bourgeoisie was no longer able to rule in the old way, behind a screen of democracy. They had to install open, terrorist dictatorships, thus accumulating new inflammatory matter of great danger to themselves. In many countries the workers and toiling masses in general defended their liberties arms in hand against reaction. These struggles constantly gained in power and in Spain came very close to a defeat for the reactionaries.

The oppressed peoples of the colonies and dependent countries have begun to stir: while India with its 350,000,000 people submitted in silence to British imperialism during the first imperialist World War, it has now awakened to national consciousness and its opposition to its oppressors is becoming constantly more bitter. While China with its 400,000,000 people entered the epoch of the first imperialist war as a nation rent by internal dissensions and hardly deserving of notice as a power, it has since gained unity in the struggle against foreign conquerers and now represents a power of increasing importance. Everywhere the imperialist world system is creaking and cracking and has passed its apparent prime of 1914. The imperialism of today obviously bears the mark of death upon its forehead as it confronts the peoples of the world.

Comrade Molotov's speech of November 6, 1939, in masterly fashion characterized moribund capitalism:

"Putrescent senile capitalism is already looking backward and is obviously approaching its last days. . . . Even the richest countries, those that have waxed fattest on their ill-begotten riches, can find no way out that will satisfy the popular masses to any extent. Obviously the source of a further increase in the internal strength of modern capitalist society is more or less dried up or is altogether giving out. Herein must be sought the root-cause of the imperialist powers' new adventures in foreign fields. Herein lies the real root of modern wars, which grow in number and extent before our very eyes."

But this moribund capitalism is still a colossus, dealing savage blows right and left, clinging tenaciously to its rule and selling its life dear. This imperialist war must be regarded as a desperate attempt of the capitalists to extricate them-

selves from their insoluble difficulties at the expense of the exploited and oppressed toiling masses. Peace became more and more impossible for the capitalists. Involved beyond salvation in all the inner contradictions of the capitalist world system, unable to satisfy the most elementary requirements of the masses, which was further historically demonstrated by the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, the imperialists, having the final say, thought they saw a way out of the situation in war against the socialist land of the Soviets. The British imperialists strained every fiber to goad Germany into such a war, which would rid them at the same time of a dangerous imperialist rival. But as everybody knows, these plans came to naught. Thereupon England and France at once began to organize war in their endeavor to force a way out for the imperialist world, continuing, however, their former attempts to let others do the fighting for them.

Is it in the interest of the working people that capitalism should succeed at the peoples' expense in temporarily extricating itself from its difficulties? No, on the contrary, it is in the interest of the working people not to allow the capitalists to extricate themselves from their present difficulties at the peoples' expense. *The capitalists need war. The people need peace.*

The capitalists need war to be able to hold on to their imperialist spoils, to partition the world as they see fit without regard for the wishes of nations involved, to divert the oppressed nations and the exploited toilers from the struggle for liberation from their oppressors and force them to shed their blood to promote alien interests. They need war to exploit the working people more than ever, to destroy or at least emasculate the organizations of the workers, and to remove all trammels upon the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie aided by its war machine.

The masses of the people need peace to call a halt to the destruction of life and limb in their ranks and to check the inroads on their earnings; to rally for the struggle against the exploiters and oppressors; to give their demands the force of organized strength; to prevent the capitalists from postponing their final bankruptcy at the expense of the working people; in order not to waste their strength at the imperialist war fronts but to apply it jointly against the enemies of the people; in order to support in every respect the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed nations which would be of the greatest service for their own liberation.

A speedy termination of the war would be a great victory for the working people and a severe defeat for the imperialists. And if the demagogues oppose the movement for peace with the specious argument that such a movement means sponsoring the status quo, recognizing the now existing relation of forces, with all its injustices, that such a movement was really a struggle for the sanctioning of relations that had been established by force, we must answer these demagogues, these gangsters clothed in the guise of guardians of justice,

that just the opposite is the case. It was your British and French imperialists who not only built up their own empires by the use of gross deceit and brutal force, but delivered up Ethiopia and Albania to the tender mercies of their conquerors, who basely betrayed Austria and Czechoslovakia, who strangled to death the Spanish people's fight for freedom, who regarded and still regard peoples and countries as small change, as mere objects of barter.

If these imperialists now act the part of "liberators" of the peoples that they had betrayed and sold, this is merely the acme of cynical effrontery. But more. This peculiar brand of liberator does not even speak of the right of self-determination of nations in Europe, but proclaims the need of fixing the map of Europe to suit the requirements of England and France. According to their own admission, they want to condemn the German people to permanent impotence; in Central Europe they want to yank together artificial states which will take no account of the wishes of the people concerned but will be created only for imperialist "reasons of state." They consider Europe solely as an object of Anglo-French policy, and want to establish by force of arms the conditions that favor their predatory desires and intentions. The iron yoke of an Anglo-French dictatorship is to reinforce the shaken imperialist world system and to set up a new cordon against the liberation struggle of the oppressed toilers and against socialism.

If the war came to an early end, all these plans would fall by the board. It would create a situation in which it would be impossible for the imperialist oppressors to play the guardian "emancipator," but in which it would become possible for the peoples to fight their own battles for freedom, supported by the toiling masses of all countries. The conclusion of peace under present conditions would not mean a stabilization of the rule of imperialism, but, on the contrary, an important step in the direction of loosening and demolishing this rule. All imperialist powers are in the throes of so many inner contradictions that it may well be said that "their body is poisoned" with them. If they are prevented from using war to allay these contradictions for the time being, if it is made impossible for them to hack a way out of their difficulties by recourse to war, they are bound to become more and more hopelessly entangled. Instead of devoting themselves to the so-called "liberation" of peoples oppressed by others, they will then come face to face with the liberation movement of the peoples oppressed by themselves. Their hypocritical zeal to assuage the misery of toilers abroad will then meet the storm of wrath and indignation engendered by the misery of their own working people at home. Instead of inciting the masses of the various countries against each other they will then have to reckon with the increasing international solidarity and fighting unity of the working people of all countries. This international solidarity and fighting unity of the working people of all countries was

not yet strong enough during the struggle for freedom in Spain to bring about the victory of the Spanish people, which would have been a victory for toiling humanity all over the world. It is, however, a guarantee of coming victories over the imperialist oppressors.

For all these reasons a rapid termination of the war would spell serious defeat for the imperialists and a great victory for the working people.

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The Communists, the truest and best tested fighters in the interests of the working class and of all toilers, today consider it their immediate and most urgent task to unite the working class and rally the masses of the working people in the struggle for peace, for proletarian internationalism, against the imperialist warmongers and incendiaries. Long before the imperialist war broke out, the Communists did their utmost to rally all the forces of the working people in defense of peace. The split in the working class, and the treasonable policy of the Social-Democratic leaders, who stabbed the Spanish People's Front in the back, who undermined the People's Front in France, who countenanced the anti-Soviet war plans, have made it possible for the imperialists to unleash the demon of war against the will of the people.

The Communists are now fighting for the rapid ending of the war. They are fully aware of the fact that under the present circumstances a rapid termination of hostilities would not redound to the benefit of the imperialist world system but would in the long run benefit the revolutionary working class and the oppressed laboring masses. For the imperialists will no longer be in a position to conceal the might of socialism victorious, to obscure its superiority so splendidly demonstrated on one-sixth of the globe. They will no longer be able to stem the tide of just indignation of the popular masses against the originators of the war, against the capitalist exploiters and oppressors, nor will they have power to subdue in the masses of the working people and among the oppressed nations the idea of storming the citadels of capitalism.

The Communists take into account the fundamental differences between the world situation in 1914 and today. The change in the alignment of forces, the triumph of socialism in the Soviet Union, the unexampled crisis experienced by the imperialist world system and the revolutionary development of the working class all open up diverse new avenues for approaching closer to the goal of the struggle—socialism. In view of the change in the relationship of forces the slogan of peace has acquired a new content, new importance.

The Communists declare that the peace propaganda is already creating difficulties for the imperialists but that it is not enough to propagate peace, that it is impossible to bring about an early end of the imperialist war without serious mass struggles, without heroic and organized effort. In every country the struggle for peace is a struggle against the bourgeoisie which is

waging war or pressing for war. In every country it is a struggle against the docile lackeys of the bourgeoisie, against the Social-Democratic warmongers. In every country it is a struggle for bread and liberty, a struggle against shifting the burdens of the war onto the shoulders of the working people, against the barefaced enrichment of the capitalist war profiteers. Only in tenacious, stubborn, self-sacrificing struggle against their own bourgeoisie, against the capitalist and Social-Democratic war incendiaries can the workers and all toilers develop into the force that will halt the imperialist war.

The Communists are making the most strenuous efforts to offset the mendacious "national unity," which signifies unlimited military rule by the capitalists over the mass of the people, by establishing in opposition to it the unity of the working class, the people's front of the toiling masses. What the Communists want is unity of the true forces of the nation, the workers, the farmers, the professional people, the women who are the triple victims of the war, and the youth picked for its holocaust. The Communists of all countries consider it their sacred duty, their truly national task, to unite the working class, to rally the popular masses against the abettors and beneficiaries of the war.

The Communists are fighting for the speedy termination of the war:

To save the people from the atrocious international slaughter, from immeasurable and inconceivable sacrifices of life and well-being;

To give the capitalists no opportunity to extricate themselves from their difficulties at the expense of the working people;

To prevent moribund capitalism from destroying all the wealth that technique and culture have created and which some day will belong to the whole of society;

To rally the masses of the people in every country and internationally on the broadest possible basis for the struggle against the imperialist instigators of war, against the world system of imperialism;

To support in the struggle for peace the active policy of peace pursued by the great socialist state in the interests of all peoples, and to unite into one irresistible stream the forces of the laboring masses in the capitalist countries with the tremendous socialist forces of the Soviet Union.

In this struggle for peace, against imperialist war and against predatory imperialism, the Communists are at all times mindful of the words uttered by Dimitroff:

"The imperialist of the warring countries have begun the war for a new partition of the earth, for world domination, dooming millions of people to destruction. The working class is called upon to put an end to this war after its own fashion, in its own interests, in the interests of the whole of laboring mankind, and thereby to destroy once and for all the fundamental causes giving rise to imperialist wars." (The War and the Working Class of the Capitalist Countries, p. 23.)

THE TRAITORS IN THE PILLORY

BY MAURICE THOREZ

IN SPITE of the rigorous censorship, the government broadcasts and the bourgeois press, including the Socialist papers, are beginning to betray unmistakable signs of the rage and fear of France's ruling circles in the face of our Communist Party's fearless and undaunted struggle against the imperialist war.

How has the position changed for the reactionaries since 1914?

During the first imperialist war they found willing servants and accomplices in the treacherous leaders of the Socialist Party. Blum and Jouhaux were already engaged at that time in driving the workers to the slaughter to safeguard the money-bags of the capitalists. The Socialist leaders in Germany, Austria, Great Britain and Belgium were no better, and their concerted betrayal of the working class brought on the shameful collapse of the Second International.

The glorious Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, alone was true to the cause of the working class, the cause of proletarian internationalism. Lenin and Stalin were the leaders of the only party that from the very beginning of the holocaust called on the working people to wage a revolutionary struggle against the imperialist war, called upon them to combat *the enemy at home.* The Bolshevik Party alone, led by Lenin and Stalin, proved capable of organizing and developing this struggle, of leading the working class to victory over tsarism and capitalism, to the conquest of power, which made it possible to build socialism, to lay firm foundations for a new world, for the communist society of labor, prosperity, freedom and peace.

In 1939, on the other hand, we saw the Communists in France and all other countries, modeling themselves on the Bolsheviks and trained in the teaching of Lenin and Stalin, stand true to the cause of the working class, of proletarian internationalism. Our Party holds aloft in steady hands the banner of the Communist International, the standard of revolutionary struggle against the imperialist war. It is calling upon the people to fight the reactionary forces of France and their government, to fight Daladier and his henchmen in order to stop the war and pave the way for peace.

But the fight is now a more difficult and bitter one. Our Party was formed and grew up as a legal party, under conditions that no longer exist today. Our legal press

was prohibited even before the war broke out. Our Party has been banned. Our deputies in the Chamber are hounded and persecuted; 36 deputies have been thrown into jail, and the twelve who have succeeded in escaping the vigilance of the police sleuths have to continue their work illegally. On November 30, one of these deputies, Bonte, who represents a district in Paris and is a member of our Party's Central Committee, made his way to the Chamber and threw in the teeth of the unkenneled pack the passionate protest of the working class and the Communist Party against the imperialist war.

On January 9, four more deputies, on furlough from the army, were driven from their seats in parliament. These were Raymond Guyot, Secretary of the Young Communist International; Ferdinand Grenier, Secretary of the Friends of the Soviet Union; Michels, Secretary of the Leather Workers' Union, and Mercier, a functionary of the Food Workers' Union. But the very next day, January 10, another mobilized Communist deputy, Fajon, a member of our Central Committee, proclaimed in the Chamber the Communist Party's loyalty to the cause of the laboring people, and denounced the arbitrary law that deprived the Communist representatives of the people of their seats. All honor to the men who are carrying on the tradition of Liebknecht and the Bolshevik Duma deputies! They are proving themselves worthy indeed of the proletariat who elected them.

The workers of Saint-Denis, who drove out the renegade Doriot and elected Grenier to represent them in parliament, are fighting on under the banner of Communism, against reaction and war. The bourgeois press recently announced that twenty Communists had been arrested in a single aviation plant in Saint-Denis. Braving persecution, worker and peasant Communists are fighting everywhere, although thousands have been arrested and thousands of others, hitherto kept at their jobs only because of their high skill, have been sent off to the front or the concentration camps. The workers are fighting—like Semard, Croizat and many other now imprisoned leaders of their dissolved trade unions—too many to enumerate. The young Communists are fighting—like the young heroes of the International Brigades, like Pimpaud and Georges-Pierre, who were badly wounded in action and are now being third-degreed by the police hounds. The women are fighting too, the examples of the two mothers, with three children each, arrested at Cannes, of the forty-five Paris working women imprisoned at Petite Roquette, and many others.

In spite of all the blows it has sustained, the Communist Party is spreading its activities everywhere, in industry and in the countryside. *L'Humanité,* though driven into illegality, is continuing to appear. It comes out regularly in thousands of copies and is passed from hand to hand, to the rage of the reactionaries. Hand-bills and leaflets are distributed among the working population. Supported and encouraged by the revolutionary workers, the Communist Party is fighting reac-

tion and war and branding with shame the Socialist politicians and union bosses for this new betrayal. It is exposing the handful of wretched deserters to the enemy, who were low enough to forsake and betray the working class and its Party in their hour of danger, when they were put to the test.

The reactionaries tremble in fear of the Communist Party, for they know that neither threats, persecution nor pressure of any kind can break the will of the Communist Party and its Central Committee. They know that the place of every fallen fighter will be filled by another, that their number and passionate devotion to their cause are growing all the time. They know that, however they may rage and fume, they can never conquer Communism, the great idea that is increasingly mastering the hearts and minds of the working people who see before them the shining example of the Soviet Union. The reactionaries fear the Communist propaganda, they dread that the eyes of the masses may be opened to the true causes underlying the war and the robber aims of the "two hundred families that rule France's economics and politics," as its evil genius, Daladier, himself once said. The reactionaries are determined to suppress Communist propaganda. They are determined to plunge the working class into confusion as they did in 1914. They are doing everything to demoralize the Communist workers and disrupt the Party with the aid of cowards and weaklings, spies and agents-provocateurs.

Comrade Dimitroff was quite right when he said in his pamphlet, *The War and the Working Class of the Capitalist Countries:*

"As the war goes on, all the Communist Parties, all working class organizations, all active workers are put to the supreme test. The individual weak elements, faint hearts, will drop away at sharp turns. Elements alien to the working class, careerists, renegades, who have tacked themselves onto the Communist Party, will be thrown overboard." (pp. 22-23.)

Many a time has the Party frustrated attempts to bring disruption and disunity into its ranks. It drove out Frossard, Souvarine, Sellier, Barbé-Célor and Doriot. It passed political sentence on these servile agents of the bourgeoisie and succeeded in a short time in destroying whatever positions they commanded in the working class movement. This time, too, the Party will emerge triumphant. But this time the struggle is more difficult than any before. It demands greater effort of all of us. We must never forget that these traitors have at their service all the weapons of official propaganda (the press, broadcasts, the parliamentary tribune), that they enjoy the good graces of the gendarmes and the courts that viciously persecute our functionaries. The reactionaries are giving the widest publicity to these renegades and are doing their best to drown out the voice of our Party. A conspiracy of silence meets the fearless statements of the Communists, hounded for their loyalty to the working class, the Party and the International of Lenin and Stalin.

Even before the outbreak of the war the government's agents openly endeavored to confuse and compromise our Party. On August 25, the day when *l'Humanité* was banned, one of the traitors, Saussot, attempted this by the crude trap of proposing that the Communist group in Parliament send a delegation of its members to the Soviet ambassador to "question him on certain points." The sole purpose of this agent of Bonnet, of Munich fame, was to provide the reactionaries with material for their slanderous assertions as to alleged connections between the Communists and the Soviet embassy. His treachery was at once detected by the deputies, and unanimously stigmatized.

Two days later another police agent, Nizan, on the specious pretext of having to make good the suppression of our legal publications, proposed a "plan" of collaboration on bourgeois papers that was nothing but a bait to entrap us into acceptance of "National Communism," that is, communism in word and nationalism in deed.

Before war broke out, an attempt was also made by another traitor, Capron, a satellite of Doriot's and long his right-hand man, to ferret out, on the orders of the prefect of the Department of the Seine, the measures the Party leadership was planning and to demoralize and entangle the town mayors of the district of Paris. Practically every Party member in a public position was similarly put under pressure and attempts made to blackmail him into renouncing the Party. And while the campaign of persecution was in full swing, while the bourgeois press was busy slinging mud at Communism, while Blum, that warmonger, threatened and thundered at the Party members—supposed friends of the Communist Party were engaged in ill-starred attempts to "win over" the leaders of our Party. Thus, Bayet, a Radical, had the effrontery to ask Marcel Cachin for an interview in the course of which he actually proposed that Cachin should betray the Party and turn against the Soviet Union. When this emissary of Daladier was shown the door, Daladier retaliated by throwing Cachin's daughter—the mother of a year-old child—and his son-in-law into prison.

The Party as a whole has weathered this storm. If proof were needed, the ever more vicious persecution it is undergoing at the government's hands would be proof enough. The government has reintroduced the *lettre de cachet,* the arbitrary arrest warrant of the *ancien regime,* and has actually issued an order for rigorous measures to combat "seditious utterances, even if purely subjective in character . . . capable of impairing the morale of the population or the army." But not even the most arduous efforts of all traitors and renegades will enable the reactionaries to get the better of our Communist Party.

Just let us see who are these putrid characters that our Party has cast off. It at once appears that they were all the time representatives of petty-bourgeois tendencies that "in one way or another . . . penetrate into the Party and introduce

into it the spirit of hesitancy and opportunism, the spirit of demoralization and uncertainty." (Stalin.) Nearly all of them were parliamentarians or city mayors who, unlike the vast majority of the Party's representatives in public office, did not remain true revolutionaries, people whose only consideration is the present and future interest of the working class movement. They betrayed the confidence accorded them, for they let themselves be drawn into the quagmire of opportunism and legalism, gradually became divorced from the working class and came to be foreign bodies in the Party. They allowed themselves to be corrupted materially and morally by the bourgeoisie, the class in power. They allowed themselves to be bribed by the prospect of ease and pleasure or to be cowed by the machine of capitalist dictatorship, for they had no faith in the strength of the working class, in the shining future of communism, in the Party and the Communist International, in the Soviet Union, that impregnable fortress of the world proletariat and hope of the working people the world over.

We should bear in mind that Vassart, Gaymann and the rest followed Doriot when that adventurer opposed the tactics of "class against class," in which connection Stalin said at that time that "it shows that there are individuals in the Communist Parties who are striving to adapt Communism to Social-Democratism." There can be no doubt that in the minds of these people the People's Front meant something quite different from what it meant to us. For our Communist Party the People's Front meant a militant alliance of the working class with the other laboring folk of town and country, it meant a struggle of the masses against reaction in all its forms, a struggle against war, a struggle for improved conditions for the working people and for the protection of the democratic liberties. Landmarks in this movement were the huge demonstrations on February 9 and 12, 1934, the strikes in Paris and in the provinces, the action of the civil service workers, and the collective resistance put up by the peasants to the forced sale of their property by public auction. The People's Front answered the interests of the working class and the laboring people, the interests of the international proletariat; and the fight for peace, for the organization of collective security on the basis of proposals repeatedly made by the Soviet Union answered the common needs of the great Land of Socialism, the people of France and the working population of every country.

These traitors, on the other hand, obviously regarded the People's Front as nothing but a convenient stepping stone to the satisfying of their personal ambition. All these careerists saw was the opportunity to get themselves elected and attain the position of town mayors, deputies in parliament or even ministers. They tried to get the Party to collaborate with the bourgeoisie, to engage in class collaboration, which Lenin called the essence of opportunism. Thus, for instance, what first caused us to be suspicious of Gitton, who proved to be a police

agent, was his constant and fanatical insistence that we should demand a share in the government. It is also clear that in matters of foreign policy these traitors had abandoned the position of the working class for that of the imperialists, and planned to turn our fight for peace by the side of the Soviet Union into a policy of supporting the imperialist warmongering of the French bourgeoisie.

And, finally, simple cowardice seems to have had something to do with it too. They are poltroons who are afraid of persecution, jail or the concentration camp and prefer to take Judas' thirty pieces of silver. The way some of them lick the government's boots is absolutely revolting. They have sunk even lower than the Socialist politicians, and that is saying a good deal. Thus, for instance, Soupé is screaming for war *"on the Teuton race."* He has taken over the disgusting racial theories that turn the stomach of every working man, of every decent person. Saussot, that other traitor, was the first to fall upon our staunch Comrade Bonte in the Chamber when the latter was manhandled and thrown out of the hall —so anxious was he to prove his zeal to his paymasters, to earn the "honor" of continuing as one of the politicians who are crying "death to Communism!" I should add that a long time ago Soupé, Saussot and several others of these traitors—Brout, Vallat and Dewez—were called to account by the Party for their dissolute and disorderly way of life, which, as is now obvious, landed them in the claws of the police.

Dewez is particularly notorious among the scoundrels who positively delight in spreading the most shameless slanders against our Party. These are the direct police agents who were either spies at the time they joined the Party and were specially instructed to do so, or have been blackmailed into entering the services of the police as a result of their ugly private lives. On one occasion Dewez was severely censured by the Party on account of his weakness for drink and his other ugly habits. He wept and beat his breast and we made the mistake of believing that he really meant it: This was not the case, however; he was merely lying to keep himself in our group in parliament and there continue to ply his trade of agent provocateur. The statement has been made in the Chamber that Dewez "dissociated himself" from the Party as far back as October 26. None of the other deputies who were mobilized for the army and none of the Party functionaries heard of it until January.

Others among these police spies are Nizan and Gitton. The first-named has been satisfied to play in real life the wretched part of Pluvinage, the police spy he brings into his latest novel. This cowardly and servile Nizan-Pluvinage was ready to lick the dust to deceive the intended victims of his spying. He has earned special laurels in the salons where cynicism and shamelessness are marks of distinction. As for Gitton, a case-hardened informer, he was inadvertently betrayed by the clumsiness of an over-zealous commissioner of police while endeavoring to penetrate into

the apparatus of the illegal Party organization.

While it is true that the Central Committee should have acted more vigorously with regard to these now-exposed traitors, it never trusted them. Gitton's constant tendency to poison the discussions and turn them along lines hostile to the Party and the International made us prick up our ears. We took to observing his methods more closely and critically and began to notice that his antagonism to many honest and reliable functionaries was deliberate and the support he gave to all kinds of dubious individuals was open to suspicion. Then we remembered that while the rest of us had been thrown into jail or forced to live under assumed names, Gitton had been "pushed" into various leading positions by the Barbé-Célor group. While we were gathering proof of his treachery, we gradually removed him from the functions with which he had been entrusted. On May 20, 1939, at the last legal meeting of the Central Committee, the organizational report was delivered by a member of the Central Committee who was worthy of our Party's confidence.

The Party should have rid itself sooner of opportunists like Vassart and Gaymann, of careerists like Capron, of degenerates like Dewez. But these scoundrels always engaged in the most shameful hypocrisy to deceive us. On several occasions we gave Vassart and Gaymann a severe political dressing down. The former was removed from the Political Bureau and from all organizational work even before the events of February, 1934, when he supported the renegade Doriot. Gaymann, who had opposed united front tactics from the "Left" in 1922 and in 1927 had been a Right and opposed our election tactics of "class against class," was removed from the Central Committee and later also from his function on the Board of *l'Humanité*. But whenever these creatures felt the ground slipping from under their feet and saw that not only had their onslaught come to grief, but had put them in a bad light in the eyes of the Party, they hastily beat a retreat. Following the orders of their masters, they capitulated in order to remain in the Party and be in a position to continue their sabotage within. They concealed their disgusting treachery under a mask of duplicity and handed in innumerable declarations of loyalty to the Party while actually preparing for their next attack.

The Party and the Central Committee must not fail to draw the lessons from this new stage in our struggle against the class enemy and the agents he skillfully introduces into our midst.

The first lesson is clearly that formulated by Lenin when he said that it is highly beneficial for the proletariat that history is doing this preliminary work of cleansing before the socialist revolution and not during that revolution.

The Party grows stronger by cleansing itself and shaking off all traitors, opportunists, capitulators and agents provocateurs. "Proletarian parties develop and become strong by purging themselves of opportunists and reformists, social-

imperialists and social-chauvinists, social-patriots and social-pacifists." (Stalin.)

The second lesson, to which Stalin constantly directs our attention, is the need for increased revolutionary vigilance—an attribute which he described as being particularly necessary for a Bolshevik. Need it be said that this applies equally to the French Communists, who are eager to win the honorable title of Bolsheviks? The entire Party, and especially its leadership, must be more severe towards those who are always "making mistakes," whose mistakes are therefore not a casual, accidental occurrence, but a system, a whole policy hostile to the Party and the working class. While we must devote greater care than ever to the development of our functionaries and help them correct their own mistakes, we must at the same time drive from the Party without pity or hesitation all unreliable individuals, all whose constant place is in the opposition. Moreover, we must provide for stringent application of Comrade Stalin's instructions as to regular control over the fulfilment of all Party decisions by every member and every organization of the Party.

And, third and last, a lesson of the utmost importance is that we must fight more vigorously all the time for the application and embodiment in practice of the Party's general line. At the Sixteenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party Comrade Stalin said:

"In the struggle against deviations from the Leninist line our Party has grown and gained strength. In the struggle against deviations it has forged the *Leninist unity* of its ranks."

We shall be able to say the same of our Communist Party of France when we have fully mastered the teaching of Lenin and Stalin and fight vigorously to maintain the purity of Marxist-Leninist principles in our ranks and develop and amplify the general line laid down by our Party congresses and the congresses of the Communist International.

The outbreak of imperialist war has brought with it a new period of revolutionary struggles. The capitalist enemies are mustering against us, against the working class and its Communist Party, the services of the traitors and renegades. The master is whistling for his pack, throwing them bones, giving them fancy collars and setting them loose on the working people. But the reception they get is a kick in the rear, as some of them have already found to be literally the case. For great indeed is the wrath of the proletariat against the cowards, the Judases, the provocateurs. Filled with scorn and loathing, the workers and all self-respecting men spit in the face of these traitors.

As for our Communist Party, united, strong, devoted and loyal to the working class and the Communist International, and to the cause of Lenin and Stalin, it will lead France's laboring masses to revolutionary unity and revolutionary struggle against war and capitalism, the struggle for peace and socialism.

THE LESSONS OF THE WAR OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE (1936-1939)

BY JOSE DIAZ

FOR nearly three years the Spanish people were engaged in a bloody struggle, fighting arms in hand to defend the independence of their country and their hard-won social rights. For nearly three years the Spanish people fought heroically and bore heavy sacrifices. But they were defeated. Nevertheless, the defeat is a temporary one. In spite of the bloody reign of terror, the dictatorship of the bourgeois and landlord reaction now ruling Spain cannot do away with the causes that drove the Spanish people into the struggle; it cannot appease the hatred of the Spanish people for this regime of oppression and reaction. The working class, the peasantry and the working folk of Spain generally, as well as the oppressed peoples of Catalonia and the Basque country have seen happier days; they have known what it is to live without big capitalists and landlords. The Spanish people are carrying on the struggle under the new conditions; they are mustering and uniting their forces, and are preparing—once the difficulties of the present situation have been overcome—to engage in new battles.

The just war of the Spanish people was one of the most important and outstanding events in the international movement for the emancipation of the working masses since the victorious socialist revolution in Russia in October, 1917. It has enriched the working class and all the oppressed peoples of the capitalist countries and the colonies with valuable experience in the struggle against home and foreign reaction, against coercion, oppression and exploitation.

The Military Revolt and the Armed Struggle of the Spanish People for Freedom and Independence

After the victory of the people at the polls on February 16, 1936, the petty bourgeois political parties and the Social-Democratic Party of Spain had neither the courage nor the ability to assume the offensive against the forces of reaction. The counter-revolution took the fullest advantage of the vacillation, weakness and cowardice of these parties and raised its mutinous head, seeking to prevent the spread of the revolutionary movement in the country.

On July 18 a mutiny was started by a section of the military clique that represented the interests of semi-feudal reaction, the big land-

lords, the church hierarchy, the financial oligarchy and foreign reaction. Their aim was obvious: they wanted to achieve what the reactionaries had failed to achieve in the revolt of General Sanjurjo in 1932, the abolition of the Spanish Republic, the suppression of the national liberties of the Catalans and the Basques, the withdrawal of the political, economic and cultural gains of the working people, the complete restoration of the power and privileges of the landlords, the church hierarchy and the big capitalists, and, lastly, the establishment of a reactionary regime and a terrorist dictatorship.

The working masses, the Spanish people, took the course of armed resistance.

This civil war, as it was called, was soon transformed into a war for the national independence and the political rights of the peoples of Spain, into a war for the protection and extension of the social and cultural gains of the working people.

In the process of this struggle, the Spanish people underwent a profound change, as did the political and economic life of the country, which had now set its foot on the path of progress.

A veritable revolution took place in the Spanish countryside, which had formerly groaned in servitude to the semi-feudal landlords. Over four million hectares of land were confiscated from the landlords, the church and the monasteries, and turned over gratis to the peasants. The peasants had their debts annulled and were granted credits, seed and agricultural machinery.

The working class received considerable increases of wages; labor protection laws were passed. The workers took an extensive share in the management of the factories and of the more important branches of the national economy. The working class became the strongest power in the country and guaranteed the reconstruction of the national economic life, which had been brought to the brink of ruin by the counter-revolutionary revolt.

During the war the peoples of Catalonia and the Basque country consolidated and developed their national liberties.

In place of the old army, which had been a tool of reaction, a real people's army was formed for the protection of the interests of the people.

Women received equal rights with men and began to take an active part in the political and economic life of the country.

Youth secured opportunities of education and of training themselves for a future in a free and independent country. Culture ceased to be a class privilege. The schools and universities opened their doors to the people.

All the constructive work of the Spanish Republic and all the social gains won in the period of the war rested principally on the alliance of the working class with the working peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeoisie, united under the banner of the People's Front.

The People's Front, founded as a result of the experience gained in the armed struggle of October,

1934, increased the confidence of the Spanish people in their own strength, raised the political level of the masses to an unprecedented height, and induced new strata of the population to join the national revolutionary war for the republic. The growing complexity of the home and foreign situation during this period bore out the correctness of the policy of the People's Front, the policy of national unity for the struggle of the people in defense of their independence and freedom from the forces of reaction.

The People's Front was a suitable form for the development of the revolution during this period.

Spain, which at the beginning of the struggle was a republic of a bourgeois-democratic type, developed in the course of the war into a people's republic, a republic without big capitalists, landlords and reactionaries, a republic supported by the masses of the people and a regular people's army.

Spain became a republic in which the masses received the opportunity and right to share in the guidance of the political and economic life of the country, a republic in which, while in general private ownership in means of production was preserved, the big industries, the banks and the transport system were nationalized, the land of the big landowners was confiscated, and cooperative and collective enterprises formed on a voluntary basis, a republic in which substantial assistance was afforded to the workers and peasants by the state.

While defending their own interests and liberties, the Spanish people were also defending the interests and liberties of all nations against world reaction.

The struggle of revolutionary Spain became the vital cause of the working people of all countries. It awakened considerable forces among the working class and its allies and was directed against the bourgeois reaction, against capitalist aggression and imperialist war.

The armed struggle of the Spanish people was an important factor in the regrouping of the forces of the working class and the working people generally in other countries too, and helped to expose the true meaning of bourgeois "democracy." It showed who were the friends and who the enemies of the people, it increased the confidence of the masses in their own strength and rallied the people around the Communist Party, the only consistent defender of revolutionary Spain.

The Attitude of the "Democratic" States to the Struggle of the Spanish People

The whole policy of the "democratic" governments of imperialist England and France was inspired by the determination to prevent the victory of the Spanish people. A revolutionary Spain would give a powerful impetus to the struggle of the working people for emancipation from capitalist rule. In the opinion of the British and French imperialists, this had to be prevented at all costs. The policy of "non-intervention," which was designed for this purpose, reached its acme in the Munich conspiracy. Under the pretext of "neutrality"

and of localizing the conflict, the European warmongers went to the length of establishing a complete blockade of republican territory, and finally of direct military intervention in order to smash the resistance of the people's republic.

It was with this purpose in view that the volunteers fighting in the International Brigades were ordered to leave Spain and that attacks were organized by the British navy in conjunction with France to compel the republican stronghold of Minorca to surrender. It was for this same purpose that thousands of republican fighters who crossed into France and were waiting for the opportunity of returning to the central war zone in Spain were disarmed by the French Government and confined in concentration camps. But this was not enough for the British and French imperialists. In order to crush the republic completely, the imperialists engineered the conspiracy of the Casado-Miaja junta, which was to strike the weapons from the hands of the Spanish people and fling them beneath the bloody yoke of a bourgeois-landlord dictatorship.

Had it not been for the actual help given to Franco by the British and French reactionaries and the Social-Democratic leaders, revolutionary Spain would never have been defeated.

All historical development as well as the events of recent times confirm what Comrade Stalin said in 1927:

"British capitalism was, is and always will be the most vicious strangler of popular revolutions. From the great French Revolution of the end of the eighteenth century to the revolution in China today, the British bourgeoisie always was and still is in the forefront in crushing the emancipation movement of mankind." (Joseph Stalin, *On the Opposition.*)

In contrast to the policy of those "democratic" countries, England and France—a policy which delighted the enemies of our cause—the great Land of Socialism rendered moral and political assistance to the Spanish people in their war from first to last. Day after day, the mighty voice of the Soviet people called for aid for the Spanish people. This contrast has helped even more clearly to bring out the true nature of bourgeois "democracy."

The Communist Parties, true to proletarian internationalism, appealed to the masses to defend the Spanish people. They formed International Brigades, which displayed magnificent courage, solidarity and devotion to the interests of the working class.

But the working class of the capitalist countries was unable to render adequate help. It was prevented from doing so by the treacherous leaders of the Second International. In order to smash the front of reaction against revolutionary Spain, energetic and consistent joint action of the international organizations of the working class was required. But the leaders of the Second International did not want the forces of reaction to

be defeated. They rejected every proposal of the Communist International for united action of the working class.

The working class of the capitalist countries drew their conclusions from these facts. They saw that while the Social-Democrats in the French, Belgian, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish governments were defending the interests of the capitalists, the Communists and the peoples of the Soviet Union stood shoulder to shoulder with the Spanish people's republic and with the working folk. The proletariat had one more opportunity to convince itself that the Communists and the Communist International, the great world party of Lenin and Stalin, defended the cause of the working people and will defend it consistently to the end.

What was the Situation in Spain?

Until 1936, the working class of Spain was split to an extraordinary degree and isolated from the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie.

The victory gained in the elections on February 16, 1936, created the opportunity for united action by the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban middle classes, which, inspired by the common wish to overthrow the power of reaction, all united their forces. This unity made it possible to mobilize the masses for an energetic struggle against the military putsch. The masses, who possessed neither a military organization nor arms, gained big victories in several important centers of the country and organized resistance to the forces of reaction.

The result of this fighting unity, of which the Communist Party was the driving force, was the creation of the People's Front. But the basis of this fighting unity was not sufficiently firm; its core, the working class, was split.

The Communists were the only party to realize how important it was to secure the unity of the working class. That is why the Communist Party strove so stubbornly for the creation of a united trade union center. But the "Socialist" and Anarchist leaders persistently worked to defeat this end, for they knew that the effect of such unity would be to strengthen the influence of the Communists in the trade unions and would lead to victory over the forces of reaction.

The Communists redoubled their efforts to create a single party of the working class based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism. But the "Socialist" leaders steadily opposed the formation of such a party, which would have ensured the hegemony of the proletariat in the People's Front and in the government.

Owing to the lack of unity in the Spanish working class movement, the political parties of the petty bourgeoisie were able to play a part altogether out of proportion to their real strength and influence. It was this that weakened the fighting efficiency of the republican army, prevented the adoption of a determined economic policy and

the expansion of the munitions industry so absolutely essential in time of war, and left a free hand to all the enemies of the People's Front. It was the lack of unity among the proletariat that prevented the formation of a strong people's government capable of conducting the national revolutionary war with the necessary firmness.

The utter impracticability of the "theory" and tactics of the Anarchists became only too apparent during this war. The whole course of the popular revolution revealed how untenable, false and counter-revolutionary they were. The "anarcho-communist" experiments of the Anarchists consisted in the compulsory formation of collective farms and in expropriating, robbing and even murdering peasants and artisans. The Anarchists opened the front to the enemy. They became an armed force of the Casado-Besteiro-Miaja clique. The activity of certain Anarcho-Syndicalist leaders was wholly confined to saving the Falangists.

Those bandits, the Trotskyites, placed their full services at the disposal of the reactionaries and foreign espionage services. They betrayed military secrets to the enemy, opened the front and, in conjunction with the Anarchist provocateurs and in conspiracy with Franco, launched the counter-revolutionary putsch in Barcelona in May, 1937.

A part in this work of disorganization and demoralization was played by the unprincipled followers of the "Socialist" leader Largo Caballero, who relied on the backing of Anarchist provocateurs and adventurers and made full play of Trotskyite "arguments." Largo Caballero's followers tried to split the trade union center—the General Federation of Labor—and the United Young Socialist League. They did everything in their power to force the republicans to capitulate, and it was their filthy hand that was behind the treacherous desertion of Casado, Besteiro and Miaja in Madrid.

The leaders of the various "trends" in the Spanish Socialist Party and in the other parties of the Second International continued their opportunist and anti-proletarian policy. Notwithstanding the differences of opinion that prevailed among them, they were united in their hatred of Communism.

The Spanish Socialist leaders had no faith in the strength of the working class and denied its leading role in the struggle, with the result that they took the path of capitulation and treachery, in which they were spurred on by their colleagues in the Second International. The Spanish Socialist Party condoned every misdeed and crime against the interests of the working class. Control was entirely lacking. Every Socialist Minister in the Government did just as he pleased. There was no clear political line, no party discipline and no personal responsibility. The Socialist Party contained men like Prieto, who demanded the hegemony of the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary struggle of the Spanish people; Besteiro, who in Madrid revolted against the Negrin government, which represented the Socialist

majority; and Caballero, who was constantly engaged in subversive activities and provocative actions against the Communist Party and the people's army.

During the war the Spanish people came to know these traitors very well. It is not without good reason that they hold the leaders of the Socialist Party chiefly responsible for the defeat of the Spanish people.

The Republican Party had always vacillated. Its fear of the emancipation of the people and the development of a people's revolution had always tended to drive it into the path of reaction under the shield of the slogan: "The republic must be guided by republicans." It was anxious to oust the working class from the leading positions, it hampered in every way the activities of the People's Front Government, which were inadequate enough as it was, and wherever it could prevented the adoption of strict measures against the enemy.

Influenced by the French and British governments, many of the representatives of the Republican Party become standard-bearers of capitulation. Having adopted this course, some of them deserted their posts at the crucial moment, while others joined forces with the Casado, Besteiro and Miaja clique.

* * *

The various governments of the Spanish republic largely reflected the tendencies of these parties and individuals.

A firm policy, answering to the requirements of the national revolutionary war, was absolutely essential for the victory of the Spanish people's republic. In industry, agriculture, transport, supply, military organization and the military training of the entire population, in foreign policy, finance and public order—everywhere a ruthless policy towards the intriguers and capitulators was required.

But such a policy would necessitate *a new government apparatus corresponding to the popular character of the republic.*

Notwithstanding this, the old government apparatus was not completely destroyed; it continued in part to exist even during the war, and at crucial moments worked against the interests of the people.

Only a government capable of tackling the difficulties unhesitatingly could have coped with this complicated situation, taken the helm firmly in hand and pursued the policy which the circumstances dictated. The Communists knew that the ideal form of such a government was a dictatorship of the proletariat. But since the war was a war for national liberation, since it was necessary to unite the broad sections of the people not only on republican territory but in the territory under the rule of Franco as well, since it was necessary to win over the middle classes in Catalonia and the Basque country, to gain a military victory over the enemy and secure the support for republican Spain not only of the international proletariat, but also of the non-proletarian strata, the establishment of the dictatorship of the

proletariat under the given circumstances was impossible.

To have attempted to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat would have meant skipping a necessary stage of development; it would have narrowed the social basis of the struggle of the Spanish people and would have made it easier for international reaction to destroy the revolutionary movement in Spain.

That is why the Spanish Communists did not issue the call for a dictatorship of the proletariat, but for the formation of a fighting people's government capable of uniting in the struggle all the forces of the Spanish people under the leadership of the working class. But no such government was formed, although there was every possibility of doing so.

The capitulators, intriguers and reactionaries remained in charge of the key posts in the government apparatus of the Spanish Republic, and its governments were not truly revolutionary war-time people's governments.

The first government, composed of representatives of the Republican parties, did not even attempt to tackle such problems as organizing an army, maintaining public order in the rear, production, and so on. The fact that the government lacked a proper orientation and a firm policy and that it was not energetic enough did not remain a secret to the enemy, who took advantage of it to conquer a number of Spanish provinces.

The second government, headed by Largo Caballero, was not in a position to make full use of the complicated situation. Largo Caballero was bitterly hostile to the revolutionary unity of the working class. An enemy of Communism and the Soviet Union, he despised the masses and their initiative, and put complete confidence in untrustworthy and incompetent military experts. Clinging obstinately to this opinion, Caballero hindered the formation of a powerful republican army and did everything he could to counteract the efforts made in this direction by the Communist Party, which, in the shape of the Fifth Regiment, had created the firm foundation needed for a military organization. All Caballero's activities ran directly counter to everything the interests of victory over the reactionaries demanded. His course was one of constant compromise and capitulation. Caballero was deposed by the anger of the people.

Next came the Negrin-Prieto Government. The conduct of military affairs was entirely in the hands of Prieto. He began by introducing the principle of "proportional representation" in the commanding staff of the army and placed a whole series of incompetents and cowards at the head of the military groups. By refusing to undertake a purge of the military command, and by placing suspicious individuals in responsible posts, he protected wreckers and enemies. Prieto's hatred of the heroic Communists, who had safeguarded the existence of the department of war commissars at the most difficult moments, led to the latter's col-

lapse and conversion into a bureaucratic institution. Valorous commissars, who had been tested under fire, were replaced by a horde of incompetents, without revolutionary staunchness, faith or enthusiasm. Prieto went so far as to forbid the spread of propaganda among the enemy's forces.

The Communist Party was the only party to carry on activities among the enemy's troops and in its rear; it was the only one systematically to tackle and overcome the difficulties caused by the government to the republic and the army. The victory of Teruel, which was one of the severest defeats the enemy experienced, could not be taken advantage of because nothing had been done to create reserves, and, owing to the criminal and senseless command to our troops to retire, the fortress was lost. Prieto's policy, moreover, led to the disruption of the whole Eastern Front and to the splitting of the republican zone into two parts. His wrecking activities were also to be seen in the way he drew up the military reports, in which he frequently announced the loss of areas, towns and positions before they had actually been captured by the enemy, thereby distorting the true relation of forces in favor of the enemy. The people and the men at the front, who realized the grave danger threatening the country and were aware of the fact that the government was being crippled by Prieto's capitulationist activities, demanded that a new government be formed to save the situation. In response to the wishes of the people and the men at the front, Negrin dismissed Prieto from the Ministry of National Defense and formed a government of national unity. Negrin himself took over the functions of War Minister, thereby assuming the heritage of Caballero's and Prieto's disastrous policy.

The new government energetically called upon the people and the army to combat capitulation and to fight for the defense of the country. It drew up the noteworthy eighteen points as a basis for the unity of the entire people in the struggle for independence. These points included: the safeguarding of Spain's independence; expulsion of the forces of intervention; formation at the end of the war of a democratic people's republic by a free expression of the will of the people, *i.e.*, by a plebiscite; respect for the national rights and liberties of the peoples inhabiting Spain; inviolability of person and freedom of conscience; a guarantee to small property holders; a radical agrarian reform involving the abolition of the large estates and the turning over of the land to those who cultivate it; progressive social legislation; formation of a people's army.

The new Negrin government restored the disrupted Eastern Front and improved the organization of the army, which a few months earlier had fought so heroically on the Ebro.

Negrin pursued a policy of resistance, but he did not do so consistently; he made concessions to the foes of this policy. He did not carry out that thorough purge

of the army, the navy and the government apparatus on which the Communists insisted. He tolerated the atmosphere of impunity created by his predecessors, and took no measures to combat sabotage in the matter of concentrating reserves and in fortification work.

The results of this contradictory policy soon became apparent. The Republican army, which under the command of self-sacrificing and devoted officers, had displayed marvels of military maturity and efficiency on the Ebro—not to mention the amalgamation effected under the command of the Communists—was unable a few months later to deal a serious blow at the enemy and to parry its attacks, which led to the loss of Catalonia.

But even the loss of Catalonia did not yet mean the end of the resistance of the Spanish people's republic, as the Communists, with a full sense of their responsibility, assured the people and the army. The men who had been forced to retire from Catalonia onto French territory strove by all means to force their way through to the central zone of Spain. In spite of the fact that the reactionary French Government would not allow the armed men to return to Spain, in spite of war fatigue and the grave difficulties, the determination of the Spanish people in the center and the south to continue the defense was unbroken. Resistance was possible; and resistance would have reacted on the international situation and have modified it in the interests of the republic, as had happened in such cases before. It was possible to put up resistance to the enemy and at the worst to win a peace that would have saved the independence of the Spanish republic and the freedom of the Spanish people, and would not have resulted in the murder of some of its finest sons. This, in fact, was the purpose of the three points advanced by the government and endorsed by the Cortes (parliament) in Figueras—the independence of Spain, guarantee of the people's right to free self-determination by means of a plebiscite, and no reprisals—which were designed to secure an unconditional termination of the struggle.

* * *

Treachery had already been at work long before the events of March, 1939. During the operations of the republican troops on the Ebro it was already apparent that the hand of treachery was active, and this became even clearer during the enemy's attack on Catalonia. Traitors were entrenched in the headquarters of the Central and Southern armies. This was also the reason for the deep-going wrecking activities that accompanied the operations undertaken for the relief of Catalonia, both during the fighting on the Ebro and during the attack on Catalonia.

The wreckers entrenched themselves not only in the headquarters of the army in the central zone, but also in General Staff headquarters. Hand in hand with them worked the capitulators and the traitors who had wormed their way into key positions in the government

service and the army—Trotskyites, Caballero followers, and provocateurs from the Anarchist F.A.I. They launched a defeatist campaign and made every effort to discredit the government, on which they laid the sole blame for the military defeats. They stirred up unrest among the people, disseminated rumors to confuse the minds of the masses, worked to disrupt the unity of the army, supported the subversive activities of the spies and traitors of the Fifth Column on Republican territory, and savagely attacked the Communists.

When, under the pressure of the Communist Party, Negrin at last (three days before the Casado revolt) made up his mind to take certain measures against the instigators of treachery, the traitors hastened the hour of revolt.

The banner of the monarchy was raised in Cartagena. It was suppressed by several thousand men of the republican army—including leading Communists. But the fleet took to flight, after the Communist sailors had been arrested; and the Casado-Besteiro clique finished the treacherous coup in Madrid and began to take savage reprisals on the Communists. The Communists put up a stubborn resistance, and they would have been able to suppress the revolt if the enemy, in collusion with the traitors, had not attacked the section of the front that was manned by Communists.

On other fronts, the traitors threatened to allow the enemy through if the Communists should proceed against the Casado-Besteiro-Miaja clique. Twenty-three days later this clique opened the front to the enemy and abandoned the people to Franco's tender mercies.

The Communist Party in the War for Freedom and Independence

All through the war the Communists fought self-sacrificingly for the interests of the working people.

The participation of the Communists in the government had the most positive results. The Ministry of Agriculture, which was in charge of a Communist, realized the hopes of the peasants: it confiscated the estates of the big landowners and handed them over gratis to the agricultural laborers and poor peasants. It gave assistance to the peasants in the way of credits, seed and agricultural machinery. The Ministry of Education, also headed by a Communist, did everything possible to bring culture within the reach of the people. Thousands of new schools, kindergartens and children's sanatoria were opened. "Cultural Militia Departments" were set up to teach reading and writing to the men in the trenches. High schools were opened for the working youth.

The Communists in the army—commanders, commissars and men—set an example of courage and discipline. In mills, factories, workshops and on the land, everywhere the Communists were the leading figures in production, and everywhere they set an example of undaunted will and enthusiasm.

The Communist Party was the only party that was active in every sphere of life connected in any way

with the war. Closely welded by a united will, it pursued a uniform political line which was approved and supported by all its members and sympathizers. It was the only party in which genuine unity and firm coherence existed between the members and the leadership, and between the party itself and the masses. This was possible because it was the only party that rested on the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism and trained its members in the Stalinist spirit of ruthless struggle against the class enemy, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and loyalty to the interests of the working masses. The activities of the Communist Party of Spain, especially during the war, earned it the confidence and love of the masses and resulted in a considerable increase of its membership (from 100,000 members all over Spain before the war, to 300,000 on republican territory alone during the war).

But the Communist Party had its weak points. In its effort to keep the People's Front together, it did not warn the people in time that representatives of other parties and organizations were using the People's Front as a mask for their treacherous activities. Preoccupied chiefly with the condition of the front in view of the inevitable attack of the enemy, it neglected to mobilize the masses against the traitors and did not crush the treacherous revolt, although it had the required forces at its disposal. But for all these shortcomings, the Party unhesitatingly and self-sacrificingly performed its duty to the Spanish people and the international proletariat.

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What are the lessons to be drawn from the war of independence of the Spanish people? The experience of this war and the activities of the Communist Party show that the strength of the working class is multiplied a hundredfold when it is headed by a united, monolithic revolutionary party and by a united trade union organization led by that party.

The fundamental guarantee of an alliance of the working class with the peasantry and the middle classes is the revolutionary unity of the proletariat, headed by the Communist Party.

The war of the Spanish people showed that in the difficult and dangerous conditions in which the struggle was decided, all parties and organizations except the Communist Party capitulated and disorganized the masses by their policy and activities.

The firm solidarity of the Communist Party, down to its last nucleus, its initiative, its firm ties with the masses and, in particular, its independent activity are essential conditions for reducing the vacillations of the allies to a minimum and for removing the possibility of treachery.

In order to defeat the foreign enemy, it is necessary to destroy the enemy at home.

In order to inflict defeat on the enemy in a popular revolution, the old government apparatus, which serves the interests of reaction, must

be shattered and replaced by a new government apparatus that will serve the interests of the working class.

In order to be victorious in a struggle similar to the one waged by the Spanish people it is essential to have a firm government and a movement inspired by a common will that are capable of overcoming all obstacles and of mustering the whole country for the one aim of destroying the enemy.

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Since the termination of the war in Spain, the struggle of the Spanish working class and of the whole Spanish people has been developing under entirely new conditions at home and abroad, in the midst of a second imperialist war.

The country is in a state of ruin and dislocation. The war has wrought grave damage to many of the highways, the most important ports (Barcelona, Valencia, Cartagena, Alicante, Almeria), the railways and transportation services, the mercantile fleet, the automobile transport system, the mills, factories, etc. The cost of repairing the damage caused by the war is estimated at approximately 20,000,000,000 pesetas. A large number of the industrial plants that have remained intact are suffering from a profound crisis, due partly to lack of raw material and partly to economic dislocation.

Agriculture, too, is in grave difficulties. The Spanish reactionaries are attempting to escape from economic disruption and dislocation by brutally persecuting the working class, the peasantry and the broad mass of the working population. All the gains won by the workers and peasants through the People's Front have been wiped out. All the rights and liberties of the people have been abolished. The national rights and liberties of the Basques and the Catalans have been rescinded. The courts-martial are trying, on an average, four hundred men and women a day, some 70 per cent of whom are sentenced to be shot. It is believed that about 100,000 prisoners, among them 8,000 women, are languishing in the concentration camps and in the prisons of Madrid. So large is the number of arrested persons that the reactionaries have turned monasteries and bull rings into prisons. Twenty thousand have been shot in the Levante and 30,000 in Catalonia. Above 50,000 have been shot in Madrid alone. No less is the number which have been arrested and shot in Bilbao and Galicia. And the bloody reprisals are still going on.

A large part of the republican army has been converted into forced labor battalions which are compelled to work without pay. Simultaneously, the reactionaries have undertaken a "purge" of the mills, factories, banks, commercial houses and the government services, as a result of which thousands of men and women have been flung onto the street and left to starve. Wage contracts have been annulled. Wage scales have been introduced, corresponding to those prevailing prior to July, 1936. Taxes have been increased inordinately. A law has

been passed making "indifference and negligence" at work a punishable offense. In a word, in addition to the reprisals, a brutal regime of exploitation and robbery of the workers has been established.

No less severe is the regime in the countryside. The land has been taken away from the peasants and returned to the landlords. The owners are demanding the payment of rent for the three years of the war as well as all previous arrears of rent. Starvation and want are rampant among the working population.

But the masses, the working class above all, are not resigning themselves meekly to this state of affairs. Discontent is spreading and assuming enormous proportions. Far from diminishing, hatred of the Franco regime is growing from day to day. Even Franco and his Ministers have been obliged to admit openly and publicly that the country is split into two mortally hostile camps as of old. The resistance of the proletariat and the masses to the reactionary regime and to exploitation is taking the most varied forms.

One of the forms of resistance is the sympathy and help given to the political prisoners. The campaign for the amnesty and liberation of the political prisoners is becoming one of the most important political and organizing factors in the movement of the poor, the working class, the peasants, and the working youth against the reaction. A struggle is being waged against the "fixed prices" and other forms of robbery of the peasantry. The struggle against profiteering is growing. The working class is beginning to resist—although not yet in a sufficiently organized and mass fashion—the reduction of wages and the slave conditions of labor; it is even beginning to fight for some minimum rights and liberties. In the countryside, a struggle is being waged—although not yet with sufficient determination and organization—against enslaving contracts, high taxes and against the usurers and landlords. The oppressed peoples of Catalonia, the Basque country and Galicia are continuing to resist their butchers, who have robbed them of all their rights and privileges.

Economic ruin and the dissatisfaction and indignation of the masses, coupled with unemployment, starvation, profiteering and terrible exploitation, the hatred of the masses for the butchers and for the entire system of bloody reprisal and tyranny, the inability of the ruling clique to cope with the growing difficulties—all this is aggravating and intensifying class antagonisms to the extreme. And this, in its turn, is tending to aggravate and intensify the antagonisms arising within the camp of the reactionaries themselves.

The new international situation created by the second imperialist war has still further aggravated and intensified the antagonisms in Spain. The dark forces of reaction in Spain and the imperialist powers (England, France, Italy, etc.) are feverishly working to plunge that country into the fires of war. Spanish ruling circles, who have verbally

proclaimed their neutrality, are actually negotiating with the imperialist powers with the object of selling the Spanish people to the imperialist group that will offer the best price. But the proletariat and people of Spain have not the slightest intention of fighting and shedding their blood in defense of the interests of the British, French, Italian or any other imperialists. The Spanish people have learned from bitter experience which is still fresh in their minds what is the true nature and meaning of the foreign policy of the imperialist powers, and they will therefore resist every attempt of the ruling clique to inveigle Spain into the imperialist war.

An examination of the situation in Spain since the defeat of the republic leads us to the following conclusions: the victory of reaction is by no means secure; the Franco regime has no firm foothold in the country and its instability is growing from day to day; dissatisfaction is spreading among the people and the resistance of the masses is gaining strength.

Such is the situation within the country, and in this situation the Communist Party is carrying on its work. The Spanish Communist Party, which has proved in action, in the course of three years, to be the most effective organizing and guiding force in the heroic struggle of the Spanish people for freedom and independence, is continuing despite all bloody reprisals to work indefatigably for the reorganization and consolidation of its ranks, for the mustering and amalgamation of the forces of the people in order to carry on the fight against home and foreign reaction. By organizing and leading the struggle of the workers and peasants for their immediate concrete demands, by employing the most diverse forms of struggle of the working people against the exploiters and the reactionaries, and by exposing the traitors of all shades, the Communist Party is enabling the masses to pass to a higher phase of the struggle.

Armed with rich experience, and guided by the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the Communist Party, winning the confidence of ever broader masses, is leading the Spanish proletariat and the entire Spanish people to emancipation from reaction and capitalism.

THE WAR POLICY OF THE VATICAN

BY V. KOPECKY

EVEN while the preparations for the present imperialist war were still in progress the British and French imperialists could fully rely on the support of the Vatican in their diplomatic moves. Six months of the imperialist war in Europe have shown that in their efforts to extend the carnage, the wirepullers of the war can depend upon the Papal See, whose real mission one would think is to work for "peace on earth."

It is of the utmost importance in our struggle against the imperialist war to keep a close watch on the Vatican's war policy. It is interesting to see what role this medieval institution is assuming today, in the era of imperialism. Relying on the ideological and political influence enjoyed by the Catholic Church in a considerable part of the world and on its centralized international apparatus, the Papal See is just as much a lever in the machinery of power of the capitalist world as the imperialist governments and the centers of capitalist monopoly. The Vatican is the political center from which the Pope of Rome pursues his purely mundane interests in the capitalist world, an institution, in fact, which has very little to do with matters of Catholic belief and dogma.

Papal Rome has its own positions of power, its own spheres of interest and its own aims in the political world. The Vatican, which has its official representatives in most of the capitalist countries, and to which representatives of the capitalist states are accredited, takes an active part in the diplomatic intrigues and the rivalry for power of the states, quite unconcerned as to whether the states in question are Catholic or non-Catholic, or whether what are known as moral and religious "considerations" are affected or not. The Vatican has always known how to subordinate such considerations to its material interests and its political aims. Taking part as it does in the intrigues and designs of the imperialists, the Vatican does not shrink from taking part in imperialist wars. And so we find the Vatican lined up in its own way in the present second imperialist war; and in this conflict between the imperialist Great Powers it is also seeking to further its own political interests. The general precept that war is only a continuation of

politics by other means applies equally well to the Vatican.

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During the first imperialist war, Pope Benedict XV wrapped himself in a cloak of philosophical silence and maintained a position of seeming neutrality towards the Central and Western Powers; papal political interests were equally involved on both sides. The consecrated servitors of Rome blessed the arms of both belligerent camps. Only in secrecy did the Vatican pray for the success of Austria-Hungary, the state of His Apostolic Majesty.

The defeat and collapse of Austria-Hungary was for the Vatican one of the bitterest fruits of the first imperialist war, for with it collapsed the most bigoted of the Catholic monarchies, the most important political stronghold of Catholicism. But, as we know, the Vatican has always displayed a high degree of adaptability to the chops and changes of secular power. And it at once adapted itself to the victory of the Western Powers. It accepted the Versailles system, which for the rest had a lot of pleasant things to offer it. One of the pleasantest was the creation of the clerical and ultra-reactionary state of Poland, with the Virgin Mary of Czentochow as its patron saint. Poland became an important stronghold of Vatican policy, especially in its struggle against the socialist Soviet Union.

Almost without a blow, the Austro-Marxists in Austria surrendered one position after another to the clerical reaction led by Seipel and Dollfuss, until, in 1934, after the sanguinary defeat of the working class, political clericalism, in conjunction with Prince Starhemberg's "Heimwehr," established its "authoritarian dictatorship." In Czechoslovakia, the Vatican ensured its firm political influence with the help of the *"modus vivendi"* concluded with Masaryk and Benes. In defeated Germany, where Catholicism arose to the position of a government party by exploiting the humiliation caused by the Versailles Treaty and the indemnities, the Catholic Center Party, an obedient tool of the Vatican, very soon acquired, in coalition with the Social-Democratic Party, the leading position in the regime.

Although the Vatican was able rapidly and effectively to adapt its political interests and claims to the redivision of the capitalist world, its reactionary ambitions encountered a new and insuperable obstacle in the socialist world that had arisen after the first imperialist war. While the Papal See employed all its political and ideological power to support decaying and degenerate capitalism, it was at the same time the most vociferous in creating feeling against the socialist Soviet Union, which in the eyes of the workers and the peoples of all countries had become a symbol and beacon of the victory of freedom and progress over the forces of darkness, slavery and exploitation.

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Believers in "divine providence" are in the habit of saying that in the papal elections the Catholic

Church always gets the kind of Pope it needs most in the particular times. Last year, Pacelli, former papal nuncio in Berlin and Cardinal Secretary of State of the defunct Pius XI, was elected with unusual unanimity to the papal throne. In Pacelli, now Pius XII, the Catholic Church got the Pope the times demanded—a war Pope. The judgment of history will rank him with those who had a hand in the secret intrigues that led to the second imperialist war. The large vote he received from the Conclave in his election last year was the result of strenuous machinations on the part of the imperialist powers, including America. They all looked upon Pacelli as a devoted upholder of the sacred interests of international capital and of their imperialist plans. It was as the confidential man of England, France and the United States that Pacelli succeeded to the papal throne; and the Catholic Thyssen group of the big Rhenish industrialists also regarded him as their man. Soon after his accession, Pius XII showed how deeply he was involved in the plans of the imperialists to provoke a war between Germany and the Soviet Union. Chamberlain came to Rome to kiss the newly-elected Pope's foot; and it is still fresh in our memories how, in those critical summer months preceding the outbreak of the war, the Pope sought by various pronouncements to influence Berlin and to launch Germany against "Bolshevism," as the "main danger," in other words against the Soviet Union. When the British designs were thwarted by the refusal of Germany and the Soviet Union to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for England, and when the Western Powers declared war on Germany, the Vatican very quickly adapted itself to the new plans of the imperialist warmongers. As we know, the Vatican played a prominent part in goading Poland into war.

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British and French war propaganda is now trying to make out that Pius XII has become a bitter enemy of Hitlerism owing to his Christian sentiments, his disgust for fascism and the "new heathenism." This is absolutely controverted by facts which have only just been made public. Fritz Thyssen, the big German industrialist who fled from Germany and is now an active opponent of the Nazi regime, has lately revealed that Pope Pius XII, then the Cardinal Secretary of State, was one of those who had a hand in deciding that the National-Socialists were to accede to power in Germany. Thyssen declares that Cardinal Pacelli was informed of the progress of the secret negotiations conducted by von Papen and the big Rhenish industrialists with Hitler, and that he finally consented to the overthrow of Bruening, thus setting the ball rolling that was to bring the present regime in Germany to power. At any rate, this gives us an entirely different picture of the attitude of the Vatican to the present regime in Germany from the one the British and French propagandists are anxious to present.

Pius XII was not perturbed by the German "new heathenism" when he sacrificed Bruening and the Catholic Center Party, and later Schuschnigg and Catholic Austria; nor was he in the least perturbed when, in Munich, the British and French group of powers offered up Czechoslovakia on the altar of their imperialist interests. Nor were religious considerations of any weight with the Vatican when the Catholics of the Basque country and Catalonia shed their blood in their heroic struggle. The Pope gave his holy blessing to Franco, who in the course of the civil war had murdered countless Catholic priests; and Franco, having abolished all mundane law and finally the republic itself, responded with a church budget of £1,000,000 and a symbolical gift—a cross made of wood from the trees of Guernica.

No, the Pope at that time forgot all the "burning cares" occasioned him by National-Socialism, for the hopes of the international reactionaries, the hopes of the imperialists were bound up with a German-Soviet war, and the Vatican shared these hopes. The "anti-Hitler" fervor of Pius XII today is no older than that of Chamberlain and Daladier. As a matter of fact, then as now, it was not religious ideals and religious morals that weighed with the Vatican in its policy, but material, political, imperialist, reactionary, anti-Soviet interests.

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The hostility of the Vatican to all the peace efforts of the nations at bottom accords with the policy of England and France. The Pope's so-called peace program is nothing but a faithful echo of the speeches of Chamberlain and Daladier on their supposed war aims. One of the papal announcements states that it is senseless to work for peace, for the war is being waged as "a defense against the cold breath of aggressive, anti-Christian tendencies." And the peace the Pope would like to see "must be dictated by the principles of justice and equity." This papal view was interpreted in Paris and London as an encouragement to continue the war. Neutral in the first imperialist war, the Vatican has come out openly as a party in the present war, as a conscious and aggressive factor in the camp of the war aggressors. It has blessed the arms of the British and French imperialists and has identified itself with their war aims.

An important part in determining the Vatican's attitude to the war was played in Poland. The cry of complaint raised by the Vatican over the collapse of Poland was by no means inspired by any concern for the fate of the Polish people, but rather for the disappearance of a dominion of Catholic power, for the downfall of the reactionary clerical regime in Poland and for the loss of an anti-Soviet stronghold; it was a lamentation over Rome's lost position of power in Eastern Europe, an expression of rage at the fact that the Eastern base of operations against the Soviet Union had collapsed, and that socialism had advanced its dominion westward.

That being the case, it was not surprising that the Vatican also gave its blessing to the anti-Soviet plans of the imperialists in Finland, incited with its hysterical cries the Finnish White Guards in their equally reactionary and futile struggle, and endeavored by baseless lies and slanders to embroil the neutral countries, especially Scandinavia, in the war. The *Osservatore Romano* and the Vatican broadcasting station scolded the Scandinavian states for having, at the conference of their Foreign Ministers in Copenhagen on February 27, bluntly refused to allow themselves to be drawn into the war. The Vatican broadcasting station even condemned the Norwegian Government for having dared to protest against the insolent violation of Norwegian neutrality by the British navy.

Even at the last hour, on the very eve of the settlement of the Finnish conflict, the Vatican worked in conjunction with the British and French imperialists to plunge Scandinavia into the fires of war.

Papal Rome sent its blessings to the Finnish White Guards; it also sent them religious charms, bibles and Catholic princes; the Vatican publications in all languages called for "volunteers" for White Finland. Pius XII followed in the footsteps of his immediate predecessor on the throne of St. Peter, who, in 1920, when he was still papal nuncio in Poland, blessed the Polish armies of intervention directly at the front, and who, in 1930, in conjunction with a number of imperialist governments, sought from the papal throne to launch a crusade against the Soviet Union.

In the same way, the Vatican has actively taken the side of the Western imperialists in the present war. Hypocritical talk about defending Christian culture and anathemas against barbarians and anti-Christs in the true medieval tradition are equally resorted to as a means of driving the Catholic masses into the war.

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There were times when the Popes of Rome declared war, ordered foreign states to go to war, and themselves led armies into the field, replacing the papal tiara by the military helmet and promising remissions of sins to all who joined Rome in battle in the name of Christ. Today the Pope is weaving the intrigues of Vatican diplomacy in order to help the Western imperialists in waging and spreading their war.

The Vatican has been assigned special tasks by the Western powers. For instance, it is to exert influence on Italy with the object of enlisting her in the war on the side of the Western imperialists under the flag of an anti-Bolshevik crusade. The demonstrative exchange of visits between the Pope and the King of Italy in January, 1940, was in part intended to serve this purpose. The Vatican is doing its best to get into the good graces of Italian fascism. The alliance between the Catholic cross and the fascist fasces is intended to be symbolic of solidarity in all anti-Soviet intrigues and to help to drag the Italian peo-

ple into the carnage in the interests of British and French supremacy.

Italy holds a special place in the Vatican's plans in the present war. The Vatican is playing with the idea of a "Catholic Front" in the Mediterranean, to embrace Italy, Spain and Portugal and designed to put new life into the anti-Comintern pact and to throw its weight into the war on the side of the Western powers.

The war intrigues of the Vatican are not confined to Europe. During the first imperialist war papal Rome succeeded in building up a system of important diplomatic and political positions on the American continent. This applies first of all to the South American states, where Catholicism has traditionally played an influential part and where in recent years papal diplomacy has displayed intense activity, especially in connection with the events in Spain. Today the Vatican is abusing its influence in the Latin American states in order to induce these nations to give direct support to the Western imperialists.

The development of relations between the Vatican and the United States acquires particular significance as far as the war is concerned. We know with what eagerness President Roosevelt last year placed one of the fastest American warships at the disposal of the Cardinal of Chicago so as to enable him to reach the Conclave in time for the papal elections and to cast his vote in favor of the present Pope Pius XII, as Roosevelt desired.

The close relations between Roosevelt and the Pope was again manifested recently when the former appointed his "personal representative" to the Vatican. This *de facto* recognition of the Vatican by the U.S.A. has aroused a storm of indignation among the more progressive sections of the American population and among the numerous followers of the non-Catholic churches who are decidedly opposed to any break with America's traditional policy of independence of Rome. There were naturally weighty motives which induced Roosevelt to establish closer relations with the Papal See in the face of this new opposition. Roosevelt's intention is not only to secure the support of the Catholic camp in the forthcoming Presidential elections but also to secure the collaboration of the Pope in any definite diplomatic steps he might conceive it necessary to undertake in the further course of the war.

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Meanwhile, the Vatican is placing all its available forces at the disposal of the war front. These include the Austrian monarchists, the supporters of the Hapsburg dynasty, whose deposed representatives are loyally working in the interests of the ruling circles of Great Britain and France.

The Vatican is also supporting Bruening and Wirth, former Catholic Chancellors of Germany, in their efforts to be of political service to the authors of a second Versailles in the name of Catholicism. It is with this purpose in view that clerical circles in Germany are conspiring against the German-Soviet Pact of Friendship, in the hope that Germany may still be driven into a war

against the Soviet Union on the side of the Western imperialists.

The Czech Catholic emigres, headed by Monsignor Stramek, are working hand in hand with Benes, the author of the *"modus vivendi,"* in the service of British and French imperialism. To this end the Vatican is instigating the Czech Catholic priests in Paris against the supporters of Slovak state independence, although the latter are Catholics too and have always been obedient servants of the Vatican. Papal Rome is sacrificing Catholic Slovakia to its higher war aims, just as at one time it sacrificed Catholic Ireland. The Pope is bringing his political and religious influence to bear in all the neutral countries, encouraging and supporting the efforts of the war activists in those countries and the intrigues of the British and French governments to drag them into the war on their own side.

While sending its champions into the imperialist war, the Vatican is at the same time assigning them the task of fighting for the plans it itself is hatching in conjunction with the war aims of the British and French imperialists. It is the dream of the Vatican not only to restore Poland, and not only to "destroy Bolshevism" by rooting out all freedom-loving and progressive ideas; it dreams of the restoration of a Europe that will be ruled by regents obedient to Rome and held down in a state of darkness and ignorance. A restored Hapsburg monarchy, a disintegrated, reactionary and cleric-ridden Germany, a France in which the Cardinals will wield their sinister power as effectually as Richelieu, Mazarin and Fleury did in the days of absolutism —such is the Europe the Vatican dreams of, a Europe that is to serve as the foundation for the restoration of the stultifying power and worldwide dominion of the Popes of medieval times.

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The bourgeoisie, which in its attitude to the church and to the Pope of Rome has long ago expiated the mortal sin of atheism of the days of its revolutionary development and the venial sin of compromise of the days of its liberalism, and which in the era of imperialism has closely allied itself with the apparatus of Catholic power, as a reliable instrument of imperialist and class oppression—this reactionary, decaying and degenerating bourgeoisie is prepared to purchase the alliance of papal Rome at the cost of any concession in order to maintain its own rule. And it is with this object that the alliance between the imperialists and the Vatican in the second imperialist war has been sealed. By mobilizing the Catholic world in this war, the Pope is to help the British and French capitalists to maintain their supremacy over the world and to prevent a new crisis of fatal consequence to capitalism from breaking out in the course of the war.

It is to be the function of the Pope, whose missionaries accompany the colonial slave-owners and whose missionary apparatus has helped to keep the peoples of Asia and Africa under the whip of im-

perialism, to help in this war too to repress the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement in the colonies and subject countries; he is to cooperate in maintaining imperialist rule in India, the Arabian countries, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cuba and the rest. The Pope is to help to secure imperialism and the power of capitalism from the forces of revolution, which are welling up ever more inexorably from the depths of the capitalist world, inspired by the ideas of Lenin and Stalin and by the shining example of the Soviet Union to fight for a new world, the world of socialism.

In this war, the Pope has become the hope of the old world. And so we find all the imperialist criminals who are driving the nations to destruction in this war appealing to God and talking of Christianity, Christian morals and ethics. The British slave-owners and the French bourse speculators, the American bank magnates and the German big capitalists of the type of Thyssen are all taking cover under the authority of the Pope. In the non-Catholic churches, the bourgeoisie is encouraging the trend towards a rapprochement and reconciliation with Catholic Rome, in order, under the cry of a reunion of the whole of Christendom, to strengthen the fighting power of the Pope, the patriarchs of the Orthodox Church, the Evangelical pastors, the Anglican clergy and the rest. And, lastly, the mullahs and rabbis are to form part of the united clerical war front under the aegis of the Pope.

The uplifters, freethinkers, Social-Democrats and similar accomplices of the imperialists, who claim that the war of England and France is a war of Western civilization, also declare, in deference to the Pope of Rome, that Christian ethics are a part of this Western civilization that must be defended. In their support of the imperialist war, the leaders of the Second International are at one with the papal Rome; Citrine, Attlee, Blum and Hilferding are at one with Cardinal Verdier, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with Bruening and Wirth, with de la Roque, and with Starhemberg and Otto von Hapsburg. In the camp of the Western imperialists we find all the forces of darkness united under the benediction of the Pope of Rome, striving jointly in this sanguinary war to maintain the old world, the world of violent subjection of nations, the world of oppression and exploitation.

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The lackeys of Rome blessed the weapons of destruction in the first imperialist war, and in doing so aroused disgust and resistance everywhere. Papal Rome was condemned, equally with the capitalist governments, as being responsible for the slaughter of the nations. After the war there arose a movement against Rome, manifested in the establishment of schismatic national churches which declared their independence of Rome and refused to acknowledge papal authority, and in the withdrawal of millions of people from the Roman Catholic Church.

Even more sinister is the part played by the Vatican in this second imperialist war, for, as we have shown, it itself had a hand in engineering the war and ranks with the imperialists as a slaughterer of the nations. And there can be no doubt that the reaction of the Catholic masses to this anti-popular and reactionary power policy of the Vatican will be far more profound and vigorous than that which began with the disillusionment of the masses in 1917-18.

The prestige of political clericalism in all countries, and of the Vatican in particular, has never fully recovered from the blow it suffered in the first imperialist war. The part played by the princes of the Church in strengthening the reaction in Europe and in the shameful machinations that, reckless with the lives and liberty of the people, engineered and paved the way for the present war, have induced millions of Catholic working people to dissociate themselves more or less openly from the policy pursued by leading clerics in the name and under the protection of the Church. In this way millions of Catholics have in recent years become supporters and allies of the working class, which stretched forth the hand of friendship to them, without attempting to influence or offend their deep-rooted religious susceptibilities. This significant process of differentiation within the Catholic camp, which characteristically has always been ignored or combated by the now allied social-imperialists and Vatican agents, is steadily progressing and will find more vigorous expression as time goes on. It is one of the most important duties of the proletariat to assist and further this process. The horror inspired in millions of faithful Catholics by the imperialist carnage must be united with the conscious effort of the proletariat and of all opponents of the war—transcending all religious and national frontiers—to defeat the imperialist war plans.

FARMERS UNDER CAPITALISM

BY E. HOERNLE

THE Great Agricultural Exhibition of the Soviet Union held in Moscow last year, and closed for the season on October 25, was not only an important school to which the best collective farmers, employees on state farms, agronomists and agricultural technicians flocked from all parts of the Soviet Union; it was not only a summary of achievements in agriculture strikingly and impressively demonstrated by thousands of live exhibits and other exhibits—tables, diagrams, charts and paintings, but also, and mainly, an *exhibition of socialism in agriculture;* or, as Comrade Molotov said in his speech in opening the Exhibition, "an exhibition of the victory of collective farming." It summed up, as he said, "the achievements of the ten years since the time when the masses of the peasants began to turn their backs on individual farming and take up collective large-scale farming."

This one sentence formulates what distinguished this exhibition from every exhibition in any capitalist country, however large and brilliant. It was an exhibition of the victory of the socialist mode of production over the capitalist mode of production. It clearly and convincingly proved what the enemies of socialism, primarily the so-called "Socialists" of the Second International, disputed—that under the leadership of the proletarian state working farmers are capable of running agriculture on socialist lines.

The immense superiority of the socialist mode of production in agriculture is fully revealed only when we compare the rapid development of agriculture in the Soviet Union with the deep stagnation, and even retrogression, in agriculture in the leading capitalist countries.

As a result of the outbreak of the second imperialist war agriculture in the capitalist countries must sink still deeper in the mire of degradation. Already the effects of the imperialist war are seen in the rapid rise in the price of manufactured goods, machines and implements, in a growing shortage of chemical fertilizers and agricultural machinery, in rising taxation and imposts of all sorts, requisitions and forced labor for masses of farmers in Europe, apart from the enormous sacrifice of life that the war will entail when it develops in full force.

In no capitalist country will the

second imperialist war bring either a real increase in the production of raw materials or an increase in the real working income of agriculture; it will only cause an enormous increase in the number of parasitic elements in agriculture, the increased exhaustion of the soil and of the men and women who cultivate it, increased pauperization of the working farmers and the worst political enslavement unless averted by an alliance with the revolutionary working class.

Regarding agriculture in the Soviet Union, Comrade Molotov was able to say at the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"In agriculture, during the Second Five-Year Plan period, we have achieved an increase in gross production of 54 per cent." (*The Communist International*, Special Number, 1939.)

He further reported that in the period between 1933 and 1937 the cotton crop in the Soviet Union doubled. In the same period, the sugar-beet crop increased more than threefold, and livestock increased about 54 per cent. The Agricultural Exhibition fully and concretely demonstrated the truth of these figures.

If we compare this with the development of agriculture in any leading capitalist country we will have to admit that there general stagnation and even definite retrogression in the intensity of agriculture prevail. As regards the world wheat crop we see an increase in the area of cultivation and a decline in crop yield per hectare. Whereas, according to the figures of the International Agrarian Institute in Rome, the world area of wheat cultivation, without the U.S.S.R., increased from an average of 81,500,000 hectares* per annum in the five years 1909-13 to an average of 101,400,000 hectares in the five years 1932-36, the yield per hectare, according to the figures of the same Institute, dropped 7.2 per cent in the period 1933-37 as compared with 1909-13.

Livestock breeding in all capitalist countries exporting agricultural produce reveals a tendency to decline, particularly in Holland and Denmark. Only in the so-called "agricultural bounty" countries, such as Great Britain, Germany and Italy, is a slight upward trend observed, and this is due not to economic, but to strategical reasons. In these countries agriculture is artificially fostered by costly subsidies at the expense of the broad masses of the consumers and taxpayers who are forced to pay for these subsidies in higher taxation; and this necessarily leads to a restriction of the world market and to the prolongation and intensification of the world agricultural crisis. In France, the increase in cattle and pigs since 1931 is due to the wheat crisis and to increasing preparations for war. The outbreak of the European war has already caused further retrogression in England and in Germany.

All the contradictions of decaying capitalism find particularly acute expression at the weakest

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* A hectare equals 2.471 acres.—*Ed.*

point of capitalist development, in agriculture. Whereas in the countries exporting agricultural produce the governments, year after year, spend considerable sums in order artificially to restrict production, to pile up enormous stocks or, while home prices are kept at a high level, to dump them on the world market at reduced prices, and even to destroy them, the countries importing agricultural produce pay enormous subsidies to stimulate production on the smallest plots and poorest soil in order to increase the output of meat, fats, milk and cattle feed in the name of *"Nahrungsfreiheit"* (freedom from food imports); they hermetically close their agricultural produce market to foreign countries by high tariffs, quotas, etc. But everywhere capitalist agriculture is incapable of advancing by its own unaided efforts. To complete the anarchy, in all capitalist countries where the state artificially fosters agriculture at the expense of the consumers and taxpayers by means of guaranteed prices, protective tariffs, bounties, subsidies, etc., etc., amounting to hundreds of millions, this very agriculture has to pay a clique of parasitic big landowners, mortgage bondholders, industrial trust magnates, commercial companies, etc., tribute amounting to billions.

This raises the question of the roots of this enormous contrast between rising Soviet agriculture and decadent capitalist agriculture. As far as the socialist agriculture of the Soviet Union is concerned, a clear and convincing answer to this question was provided by the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow. To provide the answer to the question as regards capitalist agriculture we will quote a few facts and figures.

The first root of the great achievements of socialist agriculture in the Soviet Union was revealed by Comrade Stalin in that year of great change, 1929, in his speech at the conference of Marxist students of the agrarian question, in which he pointed to *the complete abolition of private property* in land in the Soviet Union, and the abolition of *absolute rent by the proletarian dictatorship*. Referring in this speech to the turn of the peasantry *en masse* towards collective farming, Comrade Stalin said:

"This is the great revolutionary significance of the Soviet agrarian laws which abolished absolute rent, abolished the private ownership in land, and established the nationalization of the land."

These words are particularly significant today when as a result of the development of monopoly capitalism, and particularly the almost complete merging of the big landowning class with the financial oligarchy in the leading capitalist countries, the tribute which the masses of the farmers are compelled to pay has increased enormously. As far back as 1915 Lenin, in his work on imperialism, pointed to the growth of the parasitic elements under capitalism. Today, agriculture in the capitalist countries is in danger of being bled to death by the monopolist parasites.

According to the returns of the "world census" taken by the International Agrarian Institute in Rome,

the so-called "net value" of land in the United States amounts to $34,000,000,000, or $87 per hectare. This "net value" of land is nothing more than tribute paid in rent and in the price of land. It goes without saying that this tribute is higher than the figure theoretically arrived at by the capitalist statisticians. We can judge what this figure signifies when we learn from the same source that the gross value of agricultural buildings amounts to only $18 per hectare, and the value of implements and machinery amounts to $8 per hectare. We must remember that agriculture in America is mechanized more than in any other capitalist country in the world. In Germany, according to official figures, expenditure in agriculture on debt services, land tax and interest on capital—80 per cent of which must be placed to the account of land purchases—amounts to about half the total agricultural expenditure. Obviously, agriculture, burdened in this manner, is incapable of developing.

Hand in hand with the increase in actual ground rent goes an increasing divorcement of the farmer from the land, that is to say, *ground rent is passing into the hands of parasitic landowners not engaged in agriculture, of land speculators, banks, insurance companies, in short, into the hands of the financial oligarchy.*

Although in the United States, apart from the former slave states in the South, there were originally no big landowners and, as a consequence, all the conditions prevailed for the development of an independent, farmer middle class, even here large-scale private ownership of land has developed to an enormous extent. Not only has the percentage of tenant farmers increased from 25.6 per cent in 1880 to 42.1 per cent in 1935, but today, 69 per cent of the tenant farms "were so small as to preclude anything better than slow starvation." *

Of the 3,200,000 legally full owners, about 1,200,000, according to 1935 census data, are burdened with unproductive land debts amounting to a total of $3,682,000,000, that is, a yearly burden of interest of nearly a quarter of a billion dollars (about $202,510,000). This represents less than half of the total mortgage debt (officially estimated at $7,645,000,000 in 1935) on all farms in the country, including full owners, owners using some rented land, manager farms, and farms operated by tenants.** Thus, even the "American way" of agricultural development, that is, the way which Lenin described as creating the most favorable conditions for capitalist agriculture, has also led into the same mire that capitalist agriculture in the "old world" stuck from the very beginning.

In a number of important agricultural regions of the United States, farmer owners can scarcely be said to exist. According to a contributor in the official magazine, *The Agricultural Situation,* of Feb-

* Robert Minor, "Data on the Development of American Agriculture in the Twentieth Century," *The Communist,* September, 1939.

** F. F. Hill, "Farm Mortgage Debt," *The Journal of Farm Economics,* February, 1937; and *Cooperative Survey of Farm Mortgage Indebtedness in the United States,* by U. S. Bureau of the Census and U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics, released August, 1937.

ruary 1, 1937, in 29 investigated states, the working owner-farmers, owing to their indebtedness, actually owned less than 50 per cent of the value of their farms. In South Dakota, 71.7 per cent of the farm land in 1930 no longer belonged to those who were cultivating it, although, legally, they were still regarded as the owners. In Ohio, this applied to 71.7 per cent of the farm land, and in Illinois, 70.7 per cent. Monopoly capitalism is ruthlessly driving the farmers from their land, and the tenants are becoming homeless wanderers. The same magazine wrote in the autumn of 1938:

"Two out of every five farmers in the United States are tenants farming land they do not own. One tenant out of every three moves to a new farm each year. Only three in ten stay on one farm long enough to carry out a five-year crop rotation."

Thus, monopoly capitalism is transforming the normally settled part of the population into *modern nomads*; it is creating a class of homeless poor farmers, wandering distractedly from place to place. According to official statistics, since 1930 the average number of people entering and leaving farms has been 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 per annum. The figure has doubled since 1920. Since 1930, nearly 10 per cent of all the farms change hands every year.

It goes without saying that under these circumstances the production of soil produce and livestock cannot increase. Impoverishment and usury lead to the same exhaustion of the soil as the extensive farming of the so-called "grain factories" run by big capital. David Wickens, writing in the *Agricultural Yearbook*, for 1938 says:

"Like tenancy, a heavy mortgage forces farmers to invest in expensive machinery, concentrate on cash crops, usually clean-cultivated crops, and put woodland or pasture under cultivation to take care of pressing payments. The short term of the usual three, five or seven-year mortgage adds to the pressure on the farmer to mine the soil."

Mining the soil, however, inevitably leads to the destruction of the humus and to erosion of the soil by wind and water.

Karl Marx already pointed out that under capitalism agriculture can be "profitable" only under two conditions: the exhaustion of the cultivators and of the soil. Today, this *exhaustion of the cultivators and the soil* has driven agriculture almost throughout North America to the brink of disaster. According to the *Official Soil Conservation Service*, in 1936, about 50,000,000 acres of once fertile soil are definitely lost for cultivation as a result of soil exhaustion, and another 50,000,000 acres are in an extremely dangerous condition. On over 100,000,000 acres the soil is seriously impoverished owing to the loss of the humus; and on another 100,000,000 acres the loss of fertile humus is proceeding at an alarming rate. In Canada, the capitalist exhaustion of the soil practised for

decades led to a seven-year period of partial crop failure, "particularly as a result of dust storms," as the German *Institut fur Konjunkturforschung* remarks in a review of the international wheat market.

In the Soviet Union all the land belongs to the workers and peasants. The proper nourishment of the soil is the condition for the right to utilize it. *The collective farms possess their land for cultivation in perpetuity.* All possibility of the parasitic "enclosure" of the land, of imposing a parasitic tribute upon the peasants, is excluded. The producers retain the total net product for themselves and for improving the farm. This has introduced an unprecedented permanency and security in agricultural production, and among the agricultural population. Both the cultivators and the soil are treated with care. Simultaneously with the abolition of the private ownershp of land the proletarian state eliminated the capitalist usurer from the sphere of circulation; it eliminated every form of capitalist exploitation of the peasantry and monopolist dictation of prices. In the Soviet Union the peasants receive a full return for the labor they perform for society. As a consequence, there is an uninterrupted increase, not only in the gross, but also in the net, incomes of the collective farms, as well as of their individual members.

In the period from 1932 to 1937, the income of the collective farmers in cash and in kind increased threefold. This does not include the increasing income each collective farmer obtains from his own garden; nor does it include the rapidly growing social and cultural services that are developing in the Soviet countryside. The current cash accounts of the collective farms have increased at an even faster rate. Acording to the report made by Comrade Benediktov, People's Commissar of Agriculture of the U.S.S.R. at the Third Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., in May, 1939, the cash accounts of the collective farms increased from 1,577,000,000 rubles on January 1, 1938, to 2,519,000,000 rubles on January 1, 1939, that is, an increase of 70 per cent in one year! Commensurately with increased production, the annual gross incomes of the collective farms increased from 6,700,000,000 rubles in 1932 to 12,700,000,000 rubles in 1937.

How different it is in capitalist countries! According to the report of the Temporary National Economic Committee (*Facts for Farmers,* January, 1939), during the three years of the great economic crisis, 1930-32, the American farmers worked hard to earn nothing. From the same source we learn that American agriculture accounts for only 9.2 per cent of the so-called national income, although one-fourth of the population of the United States is compelled to get their living by it.

The super-profits obtained by the big industrial concerns from the sale of agricultural machinery, implements, building materials, fertilizers, etc., cannot be even approximately estimated. The degree to which the farmers are exploited by the big agricultural machinery

trusts can be judged to some extent only by the official index of prices. Whereas, for example, agricultural prices in the United States dropped 56 per cent as a consequence of the great economic crisis of 1929-33, the big capitalist agricultural machinery trusts kept their prices almost at the level that they were in the period of highest prosperity, simply because it is more profitable for them to produce less and to sell at a higher price at such a time, than to produce more when prices are dropping. After the crisis, in 1934-37, when the farmers began to replace their worn-out machinery, the trusts immediately raised their prices still higher, so that in May, 1939, *The Agricultural Situation*, the official publication of the Department of Agriculture, was obliged to state that the price of agricultural machinery was "close to the highest in nearly thirty years of governmental record." It has greatly increased since 1933, and is today 63 per cent above the level of 1910.

For example, according to the same official source, the price of harvesting machines in the United States is twice as high as in the years 1910-14. The price for plows, seed drills, cultivators, binders, etc., has also increased. This extortion by the big industrial concerns is as disastrous for the masses of the farmers as the low price of their products which in six of the years since 1930 had been below that of 1910-14. In the Soviet Union nearly all the heavy machines, as well as skilled men to run them, are provided for the collective farms by the state machine and tractor stations for a moderate payment in kind.

The ruthless and barbarous manner in which farmers are robbed of their hard-won earnings by the marketing and food manufacturing corporations is shown by the following facts:

The California Packing Corporation, which employs 35,000 workers in the busy season, has a capital of $23,000,000 and packing houses and warehouses in no less than ten states and Hawaii. In conjunction with a few other marketing and packing corporations, California Packing monopolizes the market for California fruit. The California fruit and vegetable farmers are compelled to sell their produce to this monopoly as there are no other wholesale buyers in the market. In 1937, the California Packing Corporation took advantage of its monopoly to force down the farm price of prunes to one and a half cents a pound, less than the cost of fertilizer and water. It similarly reduced its buying price for cherries. It and the Canners Industry Board together beat down their buying price of peaches from $45 per ton in 1937 to $4 and $5 per ton in 1938. Thousands of farmers were entirely ruined. These corporations took advantage of their power to buy out farmers' land and to reduce many farmers to the position of absolutely dependent and oppressed wage slaves.*

In the milk market in the U.S.A.

* The above facts are taken from an article by Robert Minor, "Data on the Development of American Agriculture in the Twentieth Century," *The Communist*, September, 1939.

there are six big corporations which market one-third of the farmers' milk output, and are thus absolute masters of the farmers. In the meat industry, in 1937, four big meat packers alone made half a billion dollars profit.

In Germany, the state fixes the producers' price of agricultural produce, and in the interests of the big armament manufacturers it fixes it at such a low level that the majority of the peasants are unable to maintain their farms at the old level. The officials of the so-called *"Reichsnahrstand"* are themselves compelled to admit that in their estimation, owing to the divergence between rising cost of production and stationary income from production, agriculture in the economic year of 1937-38 will have an unfavorable balance.*

Thus, present day capitalism gives the masses of farmers and peasants no opportunity whatever to make even the most urgent improvements in the soil, livestock and machinery on their farms. All the talk in the capitalist press about the rapid mechanization and progress of agriculture is based on the universally known fact that even today, in the period of decaying capitalism, in all capitalist countries there is a small minority of big agrarian capitalists, closely associated with big industry, big commerce and the banks, who are able to apply modern technique, chemistry, soil science and seed selection and obtain super-profits thereby. In periods of crisis and depression, the number of these large agricultural enterprises may even relatively increase; but this does not affect the general condition of stagnation and retrogression in agricultural production.

In the United States, for example, the number of big farms of over 5,000 acres increased from 7,455 in 1925 to 10,837 in 1935; and the total area cultivated by these enterprises increased from 125,700,000 acres to 167,900,000 acres, without affecting the general low level of production in the least. Also, a new type of agricultural enterprise, representing a definitely parasitic type of capitalist large-scale production, has sprung up, the so-called "chain" farms, owned by corporations. These are the product of constantly increasing agrarian poverty accompanied by the bankruptcy of a vast number of small and middle farmers. The owners of these chain farms are the big financial and insurance corporations who permit a section of the bankrupt farmer-owners to work as managers on these farms, or as "controlled tenants," working on their own account with their own machinery.*

On the whole, capitalism in its imperialist and decaying stage is less capable than ever of overcoming backward small-scale farming. Nor is it interested in doing so, for it is far more profitable to exploit the farmers than to farm the land directly. It is interested in the wonders of modern agricultural technique only to the extent that it en-

* Hermann Reischle, "Erlosbilanz der deutschen Landwirtschaft" (The Balance Sheet of German Agriculture), *Berliner Borsenzeitung*, 1939, No. 123.

* *Large-Scale Farms*. U. S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington, 1929.

ables higher rents and interest to be squeezed out of the farmers.

This brings us to the most important point that distinguishes the socialist mode of production in agriculture from the capitalist mode of production, *the common cultivation of the land with the aid of modern machinery, under the guidance of the proletarian state.*

In his speech at the opening of the Great Agricultural Exhibition, Comrade Molotov said:

"Our agriculture is equipped with modern machinery, which it never had before. The number of powerful tractors now in use exceeds half a million. These tractors perform a colossal amount of work and ease the labor of the collective farmers very much. The number of harvester combines now reaches 170,000. This year they will reap over half the total crop area. The number of motor trucks in agriculture exceeds 200,000. The amount of machinery in agriculture is growing from year to year. The number of machine and tractor stations now reaches 6,500. These machine and tractor stations perform a vast amount of organizing work in developing agriculture. The number of state farms is now almost 4,000, and the number of model farms among them is increasing. The equipment of our agriculture with modern machinery is now on a higher level than that in any other country."

These words have tremendous significance. The planned and organized supply of agriculture with all the accessories of modern technique, science and organization is a thing that no capitalist country can boast of, or aspire to.

Let us compare the rate of introducing tractors in agriculture in the Soviet Union with that in America. In 1937, the number of tractors in the United States was estimated at 1,200,000. Thus, the United States would seem to be far ahead of the Soviet Union in this respect. But what is actually the case? In the United States, in the period from 1930 to 1937, the number of tractors increased by 30 per cent; in the Soviet Union, however, from 1933 to 1938, the number increased by 230 per cent. In regard to the power and utilization of tractors, the Soviet Union has far outdistanced the U.S.A. As the United States Department of Agriculture admits, the American tractors tend to be smaller and lighter. In the Soviet Union the amount of work done by the tractors is constantly increasing: on the average, each cultivates 492 hectares per annum, whereas in America, the average is 140 hectares per tractor per annum. In the Soviet Union, nearly 75 per cent of the total cultivated area in 1938 was plowed with tractors, 60 per cent was sown with the aid of tractors, and 50 per cent was harvested with combines.

As regards combines, in the Soviet Union they actually outnumber those in the United States by 70 per cent. The U.S.A. has 100,000 combines, while the U.S.S.R. has 170,000.

Capitalism is unable to overcome the contradiction between the system of land tenure prevailing in capitalist agriculture and the requirements of modern agricultural technique. After the practical

shipwreck of the theory of "the superiority of small production" and after so fanatical an advocate of restricted big peasant farming (*Erhofe*) as the German *Reichsbauernfuhrer* (Reich peasant leader) Darre had compared the relation of large-scale agriculture to a peasant farm with the relation between a modern steamer and a sailing boat, the ideologists of capitalism are trying to prove that modern machinery can be employed successfully also in small farming. How incompatible even relatively small machines are with the prevailing system of land tenure is shown by the German *Bauerntraktor* (peasant tractor). According to the *Institut fur Konjunkturforschung* (*Weekly Bulletin,* June 1, 1939), these can be profitably employed only in farms of over twenty hectares and, in exceptional cases, of ten hectares. This means that, at best, about 45 per cent of the land under cultivation in Germany—the amount cultivated by farms under twenty hectares—is unfit for even the smallest tractors.

The same thing applies to the employment of milking machines. Of approximately 2,500,000 farms in Germany having milch cows, 1,000,000 have only one or two cows each, 1,200,000 have three to six cows, and only 300,000 have over seven cows. Seven cows is the minimum number with which the employment of a milking machine is profitable. Even in the United States, the average number of milch cows per farm is only 4.7.

The collective, large-scale farms of the Soviet Union provide a wide field for the employment of modern machinery. About 18,800,000 farms have been combined with 240,000 large collective farms. Of the total cultivated area, 99.3 per cent is cultivated by collective farms. The Third Five-Year Plan provides for an enormous increase in collective livestock farming, so that a wide field is open for the application of modern science, technique and organization also in this branch of agriculture.

Socialist collectivization of agriculture provides something more than the solution of what under capitalism is the insoluble contradiction between peasant farming and modern machinery. For the working farmers it means a leap out of bondage into freedom, the conversion of the slaves of capitalism and of nature, side by side with the socialist industrial workers, into the master of the social forces of production as well as of nature. The deeper the crisis of capitalist agriculture becomes the brighter becomes the historic fact that, as Comrade Molotov said, "in the Soviet Union socialist agriculture holds unchallenged sway"—and this fact shines like a beacon of hope for the farmers even in the remotest village in capitalist countries.

It is interesting to note that even the bourgeoisie in countries like Germany and the United States are discussing the question of collectivizing the farmers, or of forming collective farms. Here and there the working farmers themselves are beginning to raise the question. Thus, a letter by an "experienced peas-

ant," as it was called in the official organ of the *"Reichsnahrstand"* (*NS-Landpost* of May 12, 1939), caused the Director of the *Reichsnahrstand* of the German Agricultural Corporation to release a long-winded "warning against collectives." In this he resorted to the old standby of the bourgeois ideologists in their opposition to socialism, namely, that "collectivization kills private initiative."

In the United States, Calvin B. Hoover, in an article entitled "Agrarian Reorganization in the South," in the *Journal of Farm Economics*, May, 1938, stated that here, too, the farmers were raising the question of collectivizing small farms.

In America the argument used against the advocates of collectivization is that a reduction of cost of production without an expansion of the market is useless; collectivization will release still more people from agricultural production. Hoover quite rightly observes in a footnote: "In the assumption of a completely socialized national economy the analysis would be materially altered."

That is the whole point. *In order that its superiority may be utilized to the fullest extent, peasant collective farming must be built on socialist lines.* The capitalist form of "collective farming"—if this term can be applied to something that is in principle entirely different—is represented by the above-mentioned corporation farms and chain farms, which are run by the financial corporations, and these, like every other large-scale capitalist enterprise, are based on extreme exploitation, and result in a large majority of the rural population being deprived of their livelihood.

It is no accident that the rapid advance of the all-purpose tractor in America is accompanied by a sharp drop in agricultural wages, from $2.98 per day in 1920 to $1.85 in 1933, and $1.31 in 1938, as well as by a sharp increase in winter unemployment among farmers. The American agriculutural economists boast of the fact that in Ford County, Kansas, the cultivation of an acre of wheat now requires only one-fourth of the labor formerly required. This does not mean, however, that the farmers and farm workers in Kansas are living better than they lived before; it means that a part are unemployed and starving, while the other part, spurred on by debt, are cultivating larger areas, working harder than ever before and earning less.

The advance of the tractor in a capitalist country brings no joy to the working population. Even official journals like *The Agricultural Situation* (June, 1939), sometimes cannot avoid describing the disastrous consequences the introduction of machinery in capitalist agriculture has for the masses of the working people. The above-mentioned journal wrote:

"Many correspondents commented in 1938 on the growing use of power machinery with the consequent enlargement of farms and the forcing of tenants off the land, who are unable to find new farms."

These correspondents further stated that in many cases farm

houses were demolished, or removed, and their occupants were compelled to move "elsewhere." Many of those who were "unable to find new farms" tried to find employment as farm hands or industrial wage workers, and also on relief work.

How different is the situation in the Soviet Union! Here, as Comrade Molotov stated in his speech at the opening of the Agricultural Exhibition, the tractor does much to ease the labor of the collective farmers. This brings out what is fundamentally new in the function of machinery in a socialist country. It opens the road to prosperity for the farmers. In the aforementioned speech Comrade Molotov said:

"For all the collective farmers in our country the road to a prosperous life lies open. In no other country, never under capitalism, can the working farmers even dream of such a thing."

To this the capitalists reply: It is all very well for the people in the Soviet Union to talk; they have an enormous, almost unrestricted, home market. The poverty of agriculture in our country is due to "*overproduction.*" Our market has long reached the saturation point.

Unconsciously, the capitalists who talk like that utter their own condemnation. Why is the market in the Soviet Union expanding so rapidly as to become limitless, and why is this not the case in capitalist countries? It can scarcely be said that the masses of the working people in capitalist countries are so fully supplied with the necessities of life that they do not need any more. Even the capitalists would not dare to assert this. In fact, the very opposite is the case. According to official figures, in the period 1926-36, the consumption of meat in the United States dropped 11.4 per cent, butter 5.4 per cent, fats 31 per cent, wheat flour 16 per cent and sugar 7.6 per cent. It is officially admitted that the nutrition of large masses of the American people today is totally insufficient. If we take the "liberal diet" recently drawn up by the United States Bureau of Home Economics as a basis, the production of cattle in the United States would be 41 per cent below requirements, sheep 45 per cent, and cows 40 per cent. On this calculation, also, the average corn crop—the principal cattle feed—would be 25 per cent below requirements, the hay crop one-third, and vegetables, etc., three-fifths. President Roosevelt himself had to admit during the campaign for his second term of office that one-third of the nation was ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-housed.

Thus, as far as the needs of the masses are concerned, there should be no difficulty in marketing agricultural produce in America, and still less, of course, in other countries, Germany, for example, where rationing had to be introduced owing to the shortage of food.

The capitalists, and especially the monopolists, are scouring the whole world, are fighting each other over colonies and semi-colonies, and driving the people into the abyss of war; but they are incapable of developing agriculture and raising the standard of living of the masses.

This can be done only on the basis of the socialistic elimination of classes and the establishment of the brotherhood of nations.

At the Great Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow nothing brought out the fundamental difference between socialism and capitalism more strikingly than an inspection of the pavilions and stands of the formerly oppressed and neglected nations, nationalities and Regions.

In all of them we saw illustrations of the rapid development of agriculture, accompanied with an unprecedented development of material and spiritual culture; the transition to civilized modes of life, abolition of illiteracy, the erection of schools, clubs, kindergartens, hospitals, etc., etc. Take the Armenians, for example. Among them, in 1919, only 10 per cent were literate; today, 95 per cent are literate. In 1913, the number of children attending school in Armenia was 34,700; in 1937, the number was 287,500. Or take the Middle Volga Region. In the Stalin Region, formerly known as Tsaritsyn, there were no colleges in 1913; today there are eight. Formerly, there were only five technical schools; today there are 66. Formerly, there were 1,316 schools; today there are 2,328. Formerly, there were 2,864 teachers; today there are 13,453. Formerly, 113,508 children attended school; today 427,560 attend school!

The whole face of agriculture, like the people themselves, has changed. In what capitalist country, for example, could there be such a movement as that started by Yefremov? This movement started in 1935, not somewhere near the capital, but in the remote Altai Region, and not in a particularly fertile district, but in the unfertile district of Beloglassov. The movement took its name from a simple collective farmer, group leader Yefremov, of the Iskra Collective Farm. In this small and remote collective farm the members, led by the Communist Party, started a campaign for a high yield: two-and-a-half to three tons of wheat per hectare under any weather conditions. In their remote district the peasants studied modern agronomics, for they rightly argued that in order to achieve success they must provide the seeds with the best conditions as regards soil, moisture and light. And they were successful. Already in 1936 Yefremov and his group achieved a yield of three tons per hectare. In 1937, numerous working groups in many collective farms entered into socialist competition with each other to achieve the highest yield per hectare, and yields of four tons and more were achieved. In 1938, the movement had spread to Novosibirsk, the Omsk Region and beyond that, and yields of two-and-a-half, three, and three-and-a-half tons per hectare were obtained. Today, 12,500 so-called Yefremov groups, in numerous collective farms, have challenged each other to achieve yields of two-and-a-half to four tons per hectare on over 1,000,000 hectares. The development of agriculture in the Soviet Union has not yet reached its apex; it is still continuing to develop.

Ten years ago Comrade Stalin, in

his famous article, "A Year of Great Change," wrote:

"The last hope of the capitalists of all countries, who dream of restoring capitalism and 'the sacred principle' of private property in the U.S.S.R. is proving to be hollow and groundless. The peasants, whom they regarded as material for fertilizing the soil for capitalism, are abandoning in masses the lauded banner of 'private property' and have taken to the path of collectivism, the path of socialism. The last hope for the restoration of capitalism is crumbling." (*Leninism*, Vol. II, p. 177.)

This last hope *has* crumbled. Socialism in the Soviet Union is invincible; it is marching forward to communism, and is more and more becoming a power of attraction for the working people of all countries. And today, not only the industrial workers, but the masses of the impoverished farmers, are raising their eyes in hope to socialism.

ERRATUM

An unfortunate typographical error appeared in the article, "England Drives to a New World War" in the February, No. 2 issue of *The Communist International*, on page 84, right hand column, 5th line from bottom of page.

This line should read: ". . . rivals in Europe, as well as the socialist Soviet State."—*The Editor.*

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